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THE WAY OF SALVATION

SERMONS

BY

B. B. TYLER

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THE SUPREME QUESTION.

"Sirs! What must I do to be saved?"—Acts xvi. 30.

This question was propounded by an affrighted prison keeper in Philippi. It was addressed to servants of the Most High God. Paul and Silas had been thrown into prison, having been charged with teaching customs unlawful to be received and observed by the Romans. The prison keeper received a command to keep the accused preachers safely. Having received this order, he thrust them into the inner prison, making their feet fast in the stocks.

Paul and Silas, the imprisoned ministers of Jesus Christ, at the midnight hour prayed and sang praises to God. Their prayers and songs ascended to heaven. God heard them, and

shook the earth. The doors of the prison were opened and the bands of the prisoners were loosed. The jailer attempted to take his life with his sword, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. Paul, more anxious to do the poor man good than to save himself, cried, "Do thyself no harm; we are all here." Hearing this voice, the jailer called for a light, sprang into the prison, brought Paul and Silas out of their dungeon cell, and falling before them, exclaimed, "What must I do to be saved?"

He probably inquired concerning salvation, because a few days before, a certain damsel, possessed with a spirit of divination, had followed Paul and Silas about the city, calling especial attention to them by the cry, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who show unto us the way of salvation." Her proclamation, and the earthquake, under the circumstances, doubtless suggested to this heathen that Paul and Silas were indeed servants of the Most High God, and that they were able to indicate to him the way of deliverance from sin.

That the jailer inquired the way of free-

dom from sin, and not merely the way of deliverance from punishment by the Roman authorities for permitting his prisoners to escape, is evident from the reply to the question and from the jailer's subsequent conduct. Paul understood what he meant when he asked what he must do to be saved, and replied accordingly.

Let us, in this discourse, consider in general the way of return to God and consequent deliverance from sin, as indicated by the teaching of these servants of the Most High.

It is impossible for human speech to exaggerate the importance of this inquiry. The Bible is a book of great questions. What is man? If a man die, shall he live again? What shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul? How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? What think ye of Christ, whose son is he? What shall I do with Jesus, who is called the Christ? What shall the end be of themathat obey not the Gospel of God? These are some of the

great questions quoted at random from the Bible—from the Old Testament and the New. But most remarkable is the fact that connected with these great questions are clear, authoritative, and eternally decisive answers. All of these, however, and other inquiries which might be quoted are of importance, chiefly as they contribute to the solution of the transcendentally important problem concerning the way of deliverance from sin. The question, therefore, to which they are to give attention at this present time is an inquiry of supreme importance.

Do not mistake, I pray you, the import of the question. It is not what must I do to save myself independent of God, of Jesus, of the Holy Spirit, of the elect angels. The question is, What must I do to be saved? What position must I occupy in order that I may possess an assurance that God is my Father, that Jesus is my elder brother, my Mediator and my Saviour; that the Holy Spirit is, in fact, my sanctifier, my guide, my helper, and that the angels are indeed ministering spirits sent forth to render service to me as a way of salvation.

It is no part of my present purpose to discuss the work of the Father, of the Son, of the Holy Spirit, of the angels, in the salvation of men. There are interesting inquiries on which we might, with profit, spend time, such as: What has God done? What is God doing? What will He continue to do to bring his wandering children home? What has Jesus done? What is He doing? What will He continue to do to complete the salvation of the lost world? What has the Holy Spirit done? What is the Holy Spirit now doing? What will the Holy Spirit do in time to come to make men and women sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and bring them into the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and unfading? What has been the ministry of angels in the past to men, good and bad? What is their ministry at this time? What will they do to help men to better lives, and to reach the eternal home in the future? These are questions of interest, and on them our minds might dwell with pleasure and profit, but at present the assumption is that the Father, the Son, the Spirit, the elect angels, have done,

are doing, and will continue to do, perfectly, whatever they ought to do to secure man's salvation. This being assumed, the question is—what must man do that he may be saved from sin, saved to holiness, and that he may know of a certainty that he is accepted of God?

The difficulty in this matter is on the human, not on the Divine side. God has done, is doing, and will continue to do, all that infinite wisdom, and goodness, and power, can do in order to the salvation of men. Jesus, by the grace of God, has tasted death for every man, having humbled himself, having become of no reputation, having submitted to the ignominious death of the cross, having arisen triumphantly from the grave, having ascended to heaven, where he ever lives on the right hand of the Majesty on High, to make intercession for those who put their trust in him. The Holy Spirit has been sent into the world, and is now present in the church, for the express purpose of convicting men of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. For the purpose of making them strong to overcome in the conflict with evil—for the purpose

of guiding them in the way everlasting. That the angels are profoundly and continually interested in bringing men back to God and glory, can not for a moment be doubted. There is no danger that on the Divine side there will be any failure. The difficulty is to persuade men to do what is so acceptable in the sight of God that his blessing will come upon them in the remission of their sins, in an assurance of acceptance, imparting to them a well-grounded hope of eternal life, to experience the peace that passeth understanding, and to rejoice with the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

This is a personal question—What must *I* do to be saved. The inquiry is not what must this man upon my right, upon my left, in front of me, behind me, or in some other place, do. The inquiry is not what must the Chinese, or the Japanese, or the Hindoos, or the Africans, do to be saved. The inquiry is not what must my neighbor, or anyone else do, but it relates to myself individually. What must *I* do to be saved?

In a number of places in the New Testament

this question, in one form or another, is propounded.

The rich young ruler approached the Master with the inquiry, "What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The people who heard Simon Peter's sermon in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after the ascension and coronation of Jesus, inquired what they must do in order to obtain remission of sins. Saul of Tarsus, before Damascus' gate, asked the Lord what was appointed for him to do. Captain Cornelius, of the Roman army, evidently had inquired in his prayer what the Lord would have him do.

In not one single instance are they told that there is nothing for men to do. On the contrary, the answers are prompt, clear and decisive, indicating that men must do some definite thing or things in order to stand accepted of God. Jesus said, in closing the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vii. 24-27) that the difference between the man who hears and does, and the man who hears and does not, is the difference between a wise man and a fool. James, the Lord's brother, speaks (James i. 22-25)

of the man who is a hearer of the word and not a doer. He says that such a person is like a man who looks into a glass, and going his way, forgets what manner of man he was. James assures us that there is a blessing, an immediate blessing, for the man who hears and does. Paul admonishes his brethren in Philippi (Philip. ii. 12) to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. In the closing words of the Apocalypse (Rev. xxii. 14) a benediction is pronounced on those who do the commandments—who wash their robes that they may have a right to come to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Simon Peter told the people on Pentecost day (Acts ii. 38) to repent and be baptized. Jesus told the rich young ruler (Matt. xix. 16-26) to keep the commandments. Ananias told Saul of Tarsus (Acts xxii. 16) to arise and be baptized. In every case men are told to do something if they would be saved.

Where can an infallibly correct and a divinely authoritative answer to this supreme inquiry be found? In the Bible? Certainly! But in what part of the Bible?

Do not fail, please, to bear in mind that the supreme question relates to the deliverance from sin under the gracious administration of the Son of God. The Old Testament indicates the way of spiritual freedom as far as that could be experienced in the time of the patriarchs, and under the administration of Moses and the prophets. It is absurd to turn to the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, the Psalms, Job, the Proverbs, or Ecclesiastes, to learn how to come to a knowledge of salvation by remission of sins under the way of Him who possesses now all authority in heaven and on earth.

When the New Testament is examined there is room for the exercise of reason and common sense. The Gospels, for instance, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, were written to set forth the personal character and official dignity of the Son of man, not for the purpose of telling inquirers specifically what to do to be saved. Of course, the way of salvation is indicated in the Gospels with more or less

plainness, with greater or less distinctness, in more than one place. In Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus (John iii. 1-8) the condition of citizenship in the kingdom of God is announced. The way of salvation is contained in the last chapter of Mark's gospel (Mark xvi. 16) He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

But these and other similar instances are merely incidental. The prime purpose of these writings is to so place Christ before men that they will believe in him as the Son of God.

The epistles discuss questions concerning the application of Christian principles to the daily affairs of life. They deal in matters of casuistry and of ethics. They have to do with the practical conduct of those who have become disciples of Christ. The epistles are not addressed to persons away from Christ, but to men and women who are characterized as sanctified ones, as those who are called to be saints, as those who call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, as members of the Church of God, as holy brethren, as bishops, deacons, and faithful ones in Christ Jesus.

Simon Peter, for instance, wrote two epistles to stir up the pure minds of the elect to a remembrance of some of the teachings of the Christ (II. Peter iii. 1). John, the Beloved, wrote his first epistle (I. John v. 13) to those who believe on the name of the Son of God, that they might know that they possessed eternal life. In the Book of Revelation men are permitted to see the triumph of righteousness; to see the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of Christ. But in none of these general divisions of the New Testament is the question concerning the way of remission for those who are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of the promise, outlined definitely.

The Book of Acts is the revival book of the Bible. Before the facts which it records had an existence, Jesus had returned to heaven. He had taken his seat at the right hand of God. The Holy Spirit had come to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The Crucified had been preached as the Son of God. The message concerning the glorified Son of man was full of power. Those

who heard it were pricked in their hearts. They exclaimed: Men! Brethren! What must we do? The answer of the Holy Spirit, speaking through Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, was prompt, clear, direct, concise, authoritative—Repent ye, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts ii. 38). Thus the Book of Acts begins, and at the close it is flaming with evangelistic fervor. Its successive chapters are records of wonderful victories. Men by the ten thousand are turned to the Lord. The Book of Acts is a divinely arranged handbook of evangelism. It tells us what to preach. It instructs us how to preach, and the precise teaching which the Holy Spirit would have preachers now, in these days, give to men and women who desire to come to a knowledge of acceptance with God.

But you have observed, doubtless, that different answers are given to the various inquiries concerning the way of life. Let us pause, therefore, and look at the replies. To

the rich young man (Matt. xix. 16-26) the Master said: Keep the commandments. The ruler inquired "Which?" The Teacher said: Thou shalt do no murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man declared that he had kept these commandments from his youth up, and then, with, I fancy, an air of triumph, he said, What lack I yet? If thou wilt be perfect, replied Jesus, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor.

But an entirely different reply was made by Simon Peter in Jerusalem to the men who were pricked in their hearts and exclaimed, What shall we do! (Acts ii. 37-38). The preacher told them to repent and be baptized. He said not one word about keeping the commandments quoted by the Master in his interview with the rich young man.

When Saul of Tarsus was stricken to the earth, on his way to Damascus, Ananias, a devout man, was commissioned to give him instructions as to what the Lord would have

him do. Ananias said nothing about keeping the commandments; nothing about repentance, but told Saul to arise and be baptized. (Acts xxii. 16).

In the case of the Philippian prison keeper (Acts xvi. 29-34) there is nothing said about repentance, about keeping the commandments. He is told to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

You will observe that the rich young ruler is directed to keep certain commandments contained in the Old Testament; that the people in Jerusalem, on Pentecost, are told to repent and be baptized; that Saul is commanded to be baptized, while the jailer is required to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

In what way now can these various replies be harmonized? Partly by consideration of the fact that the persons addressed occupied different positions, moral and spiritual, and partly by the fact of a difference in time, and so a difference of dispensation. Paul says (Rom. xv. 8) that Jesus was a minister of the circumcision. He also says (Gal. iv. 4) that when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under

the law. Now this minister of the circumcision, when he was among men, lived under the law, but when he came to his death (Col. ii. 14) Paul says that he blotted out the handwriting of the ordinances which was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. Paul also says (Eph. ii. 15) that Jesus abolished the law. The instruction given by Christ to the rich young ruler (Matt. xix.) was given during the reign of the law of Moses before the handwriting of the ordinances was taken out of the way, and by a teacher who was a minister of the circumcision.

These facts explain the language of Jesus to the young man. Another explanation of the various answers, is, as already intimated, to be found in the fact that men occupy different positions, moral and spiritual. So far as the question of salvation is concerned, the entire race may be divided into five classes. Every person is either (1) an unbeliever, or (2) a believer, or (3) a penitent, or (4) a baptized penitent believer, or (5) a backslider. Each of these classes is instructed as to the

steps to be taken in order to enter into fellowship with God, and so to obtain forgiveness of sins.

The unbeliever is told to believe (Acts xvi. 31); the believer is told to repent (Acts ii. 38); the penitent believer is told to be baptized (Acts ii. 38; xxii. 16); the baptized penitent believer is told to add all Christian graces to his well-begun faith (II. Peter i. 5-11); the backslider is told to repent and pray for forgiveness (Acts viii. 22). There is no confusion in the teaching of Scripture concerning this matter; everything is perfectly plain, and straightforward, and transparent to the understanding, when men are placed in their appropriate positions and the Word of God is intelligently divided.

If, now, a person will follow these directions, and take these steps, there is no doubt whatever of his acceptance with God. Nor is he under the necessity of trusting to emotions or feelings. He rests in the sure Word of God for a knowledge of his salvation. Connected with each step in this process is a promise, a definite promise, as sure as the

word and oath of Jehovah. Is it certain that a man who will do these things, who will be guided, will be saved? It is as absolutely certain as it is that the Bible contains a message from God. It is as absolutely certain that such a person will be accepted of God as anything possible can be. In order that men who have fled for refuge may have a strong consolation (Heb. vi. 18), God has not only given us his word, but he has confirmed this word by an oath, and this oath he has confirmed by the blood of his only begotten Son. For any person, therefore, to doubt in this matter is to doubt God himself, is to discredit his word and oath—the word and oath sealed by the blood of his only Son.

Here then is a rock on which we may build with absolute security. Thus we have found an answer to the supreme question which is clear, intelligible, infallible and satisfactory.

THE FAITH THAT SAVES.

"Thy faith hath made thee whole."—Matthew ix. 22.

This is a word of encouragement from the Christ addressed to a timid woman. The context informs us that she had been diseased twelve years. Mark tells us that she had suffered many things of many physicians, had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. She heard of Jesus and of his wonderful power as a healer. She believed in Him. This faith prompted her to press through the crowd and touch the hem of his garment. She said to herself, "If I touch but His raiment, I shall be made whole." Nor was she disappointed, because, instantly, having touched Him she realized that her body was healed of the plague. It was her faith that impelled her to approach the Healer that she might receive physical health.

The word translated "made whole" means

to heal, to preserve, to save, to make whole. Our spiritual health depends on faith to quite as great an extent as did the physical health of this unfortunate woman. More than once during his personal ministry among men did the Master say that the physically afflicted were cured by faith, but the entire tenor of the New Testament teaching is that sin-sick men and women are made spiritually whole by this same principle. The value of faith is thus brought before our minds. Let us for a few moments close the Bible, and inquire into the value of faith in other departments of life than that of religion.

Is faith of any worth in the common and daily concerns of life? The family is a product of faith. Men and women are drawn together in the sacred relations of husband and wife by faith. They believe in one another. Destroy this confidence and the home is ruined. Wives believe in husbands; husbands have faith in wives. Parents believe in their children; children have confidence in their parents. Masters believe in their servants; servants trust their masters. So it comes to pass that

the members of a household are drawn and held together in harmonious relations by faith.

Faith is a fundamental principle in business. A commercial panic, for instance, is caused largely, primarily we may say, by a loss of faith. Men for this or that apparent reason distrust one another, and as a result begin to withdraw assistance from and to press one another until there is such a serious disturbance of business that we call the situation a panic, and this very term is derived from a Greek word that signifies of or pertaining to the god Pan, to whom the causing of sudden fright was popularly ascribed. A panic is, therefore, a sudden and really groundless fright. But this alarm is a result of a loss of faith, a decay of confidence in one another.

This great city, the commercial capital of the New World, lives and moves and has its being by faith. The commercial distress through which we have been passing for months furnishes an admirable illustration of the thought that at this moment I am attempting to present. The financial agony of this time is not a result of a scarcity of money.

There is as much specie and currency in circulation as there has been for a long time. Indeed there is more money in New York at this present moment, and has been for months, than at any previous period of the city's history, but never before has there been such distress, so wide-spread and so great, as during the winter of 1893-1894. Why? Largely because men lack faith. Men do not believe in one another. Men have not confidence in each other's plans, schemes, enterprises, methods. There is a distrust out of which is born timidity; out of which comes fear; out of which springs a panic.

The farmer, the merchant, the mechanic, the lawyer, the doctor, the teacher, all classes and conditions of men in civilized communities, live and conduct their business, their vocations, their professions and their trades, by faith. Faith, therefore, is not limited to religion—it is a universal principle. All men have, must have, faith. Life, in organized communities, is impossible without faith. I do not say—note well my words—I do not say that all have faith in God, that all believe

in Jesus Christ Our Lord. There are some who do not believe in God. There are men who reject Jesus as Lord. But men must believe, men must have faith, in something or somebody. Without faith it is impossible for them to live together.

Let us now open the New Testament and see what it has to say as to the value of faith. A few familiar texts must suffice. Jesus says in the great commission as written by Mark, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark xvi. 16.) In these words belief is made a condition of salvation; the absence of faith is mentioned as the ground of condemnation. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews xi. 6) says that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that he who comes to God must believe that God exists and that he has a reward for those who diligently seek him. So far as the importance of faith is concerned, this language can not, by comment, be made plainer. The simple, straightforward proposition is that it is impossible to please God without faith.

If a man unites with the church without faith, the act is not acceptable to God. If one is baptized without faith, it does not please God. If the Lord's table is approached and if the Lord's supper is eaten without faith, God is not pleased.

In another place (Rom. xiv. 23) it is said that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. The word "must" is employed in the text cited from the Epistle to the Hebrews. He that cometh to God *must* believe—not *may* but *must*. Be so good as to observe, since these Scriptures are given by inspiration of God, that this is a Divine "must." The word employed signifies necessity. As God himself says, it is necessary, absolutely essential, that whoever would come to God acceptably should believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

The prison keeper in Philippi exclaimed at the midnight hour, "Sirs, what *must* I do to be saved" (Acts xvi. 30). The same word is employed as in the passage quoted from the 11th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. "What *must* I do" said this alarmed man.

The answer of Paul, an ambassador of Jesus Christ, was that he must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. From Paul's point of view, this is what the unbeliever must do in order to be saved. I speak of Paul as an "ambassador" of Christ; he thus designates himself. An ambassador, according to Webster, is a minister of the highest rank. The word employed by Paul may mean nothing more than an elderly person, an aged man, or, as we would say, an elder in the church of Christ. But he does not leave us in doubt of his meaning when he calls himself an ambassador. In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, at the 5th chapter and 20th verse, he says, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God."

You will observe that Paul explains that his word is as if God were speaking. His entreaty is as if Christ himself were pleading. When he calls himself an ambassador for Christ he means therefore to produce the impression that he spoke for God, for Christ. Men discuss essentials and non-essentials in

their reasonings on the subject of salvation. When a man occupying the position of Paul says that a certain thing must be, that fact places it among the things essential to salvation. But Paul, in effect, says to the prison keeper in Philippi, you *must* believe—this is one thing with which you are not at liberty to dispense, if you will enter into the possession and enjoyment of salvation.

The word "essential" has in this connection been employed. What does it mean? What do I mean when I say that faith is essential to salvation? I intend to be understood as saying that this is New Testament doctrine, and this again means that to every rational person who possesses ability to believe, who possesses what may be called the faith faculty and who hears the Gospel, faith is an indispensable condition of salvation, and the faith which Paul said was essential to salvation, was belief in Jesus Christ. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). This is enough as to the importance of faith.

Now, if faith possesses supreme value in the

matter which to every human being is of transcendent importance, we ought certainly to spend time in inquiring into its nature. Pollok tells us that:

"Faith was bewilder'd much by men who meant
To make it clear, so simple in itself,
A thought so rudimental and so plain,
That none by comment could it plainer make
All faith was one. In object; not in kind,
The difference lay. The faith that saved a soul,
And that which in the common truth believed,
In essence were the same. Hear, then, what faith,
True Christian faith, which brought salvation, was:
Belief in all that God revealed to men;
Observe:—in all that God reveal'd to men
In all he promised, threaten'd, commanded, said,
Without exception, and without a doubt."

Pollok's "Course of Time," Book VIII., p. 189.

While some things in this quotation may not be defensible, the general trend of thought is correct. The difference between the faith which men exercise in the common affairs of life, and that by which the soul is saved, is rather in the thing believed than in the manner of exercising faith.

To bring out the nature of the faith by

which deliverance from sin is wrought, let us observe the principle at work. How does a man act when under the influence of faith in God? A few illustrations from the Bible will contain the answer to this question. "Abel believed in God and offered" (Genesis 4). "Abel believed in God and offered sacrifice" (Hebrews xi. 4). "As a result of his faith he offered an excellent sacrifice." We are told that because of his belief (Hebrews xi. 4) his sacrifice was more acceptable to God than was the offering of his brother Cain.

As a result of Enoch's faith he walked with God (Genesis v. 22). The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says (Hebrews xi. 5) that "by faith Enoch was translated." The writer of the Book of Genesis (v. 24) says that "God took him." But before God "took him" he "walked with God," and this "walk with God" was on account of his faith.

Noah was a man of faith. God commanded him to build an ark. He told him the kind of vessel he would have built. The historian says that "according to all that God commanded him so did he" (Genesis vi. 22). "And Noah

did according unto all that the Lord commanded him" (Genesis vii. 5). "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark" (Genesis vii. 1). "And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark" (Genesis vii. 7). "And God spake unto Noah saying, go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons and thy sons' wives with thee" (Genesis viii. 15-16). "And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him" (Genesis viii. 18). This man "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (Genesis vi. 9). After he came out of the ark "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar" (Genesis viii. 20). The Lord was so pleased with the conduct of his servant that he said: "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake" (Genesis viii. 21). And God said: "I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you" (Genesis ix. 9).

All of this was simply faith in operation,

for we read (Hebrews xi. 7) that "by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." But time would fail me to tell of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Sara, and Moses, and Joshua, and Joseph, and Rahab, and Gedeon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthae, and David, and Solomon, and Paul, and Peter, and James, and John. These, all under the influence of faith, were promptly and exactly obedient to every command of God.

In the 4th chapter of the epistle to the saints in Rome (verse 21) the faith of Abraham is described as a firm persuasion that what God had promised he was able also to perform, and it was this faith, according to Paul, (verse 22) which was imputed to him for righteousness.

In some passages in the New Testament the object of faith is a fact or facts, in others a person. In the 10th chapter of Romans (verses 9, 10) we are told that if a man will

believe in his heart that God raised Jesus from the dead and will confess with his mouth this belief, he will be saved. Since with the heart men believe unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. The specified object of faith in this place is the fact of our Lord's resurrection, but in Paul's instruction to the jailer in Philippi (Acts xvi. 31) the Son of God himself is the object of faith. The explanation is as follows:

Before one can believe on or in a person, there must be something known and believed concerning the one who is the object of faith. To receive as true the Gospel facts, to believe that Jesus died for our sins, to believe that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, must, of necessity, precede confidence in him. If these things are true concerning Him, then he is abundantly able to perform all that he has promised. If He is able, he is certainly willing, else he would not have promised, therefore I can trust him, and do, to deliver me from sin and its consequences and bring me home at last. This seems to have been the nature of Paul's faith, for he

says (II. Timothy i. 12) I know in whom, not what, but whom, I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed unto him.

There are degrees of faith, for we read in the New Testament (Matt. viii. 10) of great faith; (Matt. viii. 26) little faith; (Rom. xiv. 1) weak faith; (Luke xvii. 6) of faith as a grain of mustard seed; and the disciples prayed (Luke xvii. 5) for an increase of faith.

The story of the beginning of faith in Christ as told in the 1st chapter of John is both interesting and instructive. John the Baptist was in the midst of his ministry, and a committee of priests and Levites from the Jews was sent to interview him. He told this committee candidly that he was neither the Christ, Elias nor that prophet. He said that he was merely a voice, calling attention to one so far superior to him that he was not worthy to unloose the latchet of his shoes. The day after this interview, when John saw Jesus, he called attention to him as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. A little later, apparently on the same day,

he declared that Jesus was the Son of God. The day following he called the attention of two of his disciples to Jesus, and commended him to them as the Lamb of God. These Disciples at once followed Jesus. Andrew was one of them. He told his brother Simon that he thought he had found the Messias. Peter in this way was led to believe in Jesus so far as to go with him and receive instruction.

On the next day after, Jesus invited a man named Philip to accompany him. Philip did so. He was, with Andrew and Peter and John, the first three disciples of Christ, a citizen of Bethsaida. Philip said to a man named Nathanæl, I think I have found the one of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write. I fancy I see the look of scorn pass over the face of Nathanæl as he said in reply to this suggestion, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip was a man of such good common sense that he simply said, "Come and see." A very brief interview with Jesus satisfied Nathanæl that the person to whom Philip had called his attention was the Son of God, the King of Israel.

Jesus and his five disciples attended a wedding. At the marriage in Cana He turned water into wine. His disciples believed on him (John ii. 11). This beginning of faith was exceedingly simple, but it increased in largeness, in intelligence, in intensity, in clearness, until it became what we see described in the writings of John the Beloved, and Simon Peter a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ. See also the beginnings of faith in the converts to Christ, under the preaching of the apostles, after the return of their Lord to heaven. In Jerusalem Peter preached (Acts ii. 22) that Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God by miracles, and wonders and signs. He told the people that they put Jesus to death (verse 23), but (verse 32) God raised him from the dead. Therefore, (verse 36) let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ. This was what was preached and what was believed in Jerusalem on the occasion of the first Pentecost after the ascension and coronation of Messiah, and where ever the Gospel was preached in that early period, it

was preached in this simple style, and where ever men were led to believe in Christ, they began on this low plane and were led up by degrees to a large, intelligent, vigorous, transforming faith.

Believing these facts concerning Jesus, a great multitude of men obeyed him as both Lord and Christ. We therefore read (Acts ii. 41) that those who gladly received as true the declarations of Simon Peter concerning the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, his exaltation to a place at the right hand of God, the fact that he was Lord over all and the Christ, were baptized. Thus they entered the way of salvation. How simple and rational the beginning! From what has been said it must be apparent to all that the faith by which men are saved is a product of testimony. The faith of all to whom reference has been made came by hearing (see Rom. x. 17). If faith is begotten in this way, and if faith possesses the importance in the matter of salvation which is here ascribed to it; if, without faith, it is impossible to please God (Heb. xi. 6); if men must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in order

to be saved (Acts xvi. 30); 31); how zealous and diligent and persistent ought disciples of Christ to be in preaching the Gospel to the whole creation! How can men believe in Him of whom they have not heard (Rom. x. 14). God help those who believe in Christ to be obedient to him when he commands them (Mark xvi. 15; Matt. xxviii. 18-20; Luke xxiv. 47; John xx. 21) to preach the Gospel to the whole creation, to make disciples of all nations, to proclaim repentance and remission of sins in his name, to go to the world with a message of love under his authority as he came with a similar message from Our Father in Heaven. Amen.

REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE.

"God * * * commandeth all men everywhere to repent."—Acts xvii. 30.

This is the language of Paul in Athens. The words quoted are in a discourse delivered by the great preacher to an audience of cultivated idolaters. The opportunity to preach in Athens came about in this way: Paul was detained in the capital of Greece en route from Thessalonica to Corinth, waiting for Silas and Timothy, his companions in labor. The spirit of the good man was stirred within him when he saw the city full of idols. Petronius said, satirically, that it was easier to find a god than a man in Athens. Pausanias declared that Athens had more images than all the rest of Greece put together. Xenophon affirmed that the whole city was an altar and a votive offering to the gods.

The city was not wholly given to idolatry, as in our English version, but it was full of

idols. There was, we know, a Jewish synagogue in Athens. In it Paul preached. In the market-places also Paul met with and discoursed to the people. In these places he met, daily, devout men. In the market-places philosophers heard him. They said, "What will this babbler say?" The Epicureans and Stoics of Athens entertained but a poor opinion of Paul. The word which they employed to describe him may be translated by the word "chatterer." It is defined by Strong in his "Exhaustive Concordance" by the words "sponger," "loafer," especially a "gossip or trifler in talk."

The substance of Paul's discourses, formal and informal, in the synagogue and in the market-places, was the substance of his discourses everywhere during the entire period of his ministry, that is, "Jesus and the resurrection." Because Paul spoke of the resurrection, some were of the opinion that he was a proclaimel of strange gods. After a time spent in the synagogues and in the market-places, with the people, Paul received an invitation to deliver an address on this new doctrine before the highest judicial court in

Athens. The historian explains (Acts xvii. 21) that the invitation was extended, not on account of a desire to know the way of life, but because all the Athenians and strangers who were in Athens spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

Of this fact Paul, probably, was not ignorant. He accepted the invitation, and delivered an address in which he reminded the curiosity seekers who were before him that God now commands all men everywhere to repent. Doubtless they discovered, as the discourse proceeded, that this preacher was no "chatterer," no "gossip," no "trifler," as they had vainly thought, but an intensely earnest man, with a supremely solemn, and transcendently important message from the God who made all things, and who is Lord of heaven and earth.

What a consummate politician was Paul! He began his discourse with a word well calculated to secure the respectful, if not sympathetic attention of his audience. He told them that they were very religious; in fact, that they were more religious than others.

The word which he employed signifies literally "very reverent to demons." The reason why he thus speaks of them is the fact that as he passed by and observed their objects of veneration, he saw an altar on which had been inscribed Greek words, signifying: "To an unknown god." He immediately added (Acts xvii. 23): "whom, therefore, not knowing, ye reverence—him I announce to you."

In this tactful way the God who made the world and all things therein; the God who dwells not in temples made with men's hands; the God who is not worshiped with men's hands as though in need; the God who gives to all life, and breath, and all things; the God who hath made of one all nations; the God in whom we live, and move and have our being; the God whose children we are—in this adroit manner did Paul introduce the subject of his discourse. He assured his audience that what he had to say concerning God and his paternal relations to men was no new doctrine, because certain also of their own poets had said, "For we are also his offspring."

The reference here is probably to the poet Arratus, who lived about 270 years before Christ. But other Greek poets had said substantially the same. Cleanthes, who lived about 300 years before Christ, used very nearly the same language in a well known hymn to Jupiter. Plato, in the same spirit, declared that "God is the father of noble children;" and Plutarch that "the soul is not only made by him, but begotten by him." Observe, please, that Paul does not quote the Bible, but a heathen poet. He quotes as authority that which he knew his audience would accept as such. Having fortified his position by a quotation from one of their own authors, he proceeds to say (Acts xvii. 28): "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."

The Athenians confessed their ignorance of the Deity whom Paul preached when they placed the inscription on the altar to which the preacher referred in the beginning of his discourse. They could not, therefore, be offended when he employed their own word,

and said in the next sentence that "the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." The reason why men ought to repent is immediately given in the words following: "Because He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." (Acts xvii. 31). Evidence of this is found in the fact that God raised this man from among the dead. Thus "Jesus and the resurrection," Paul's universal theme, is skillfully introduced. What he had said in the synagogue and in the market-places about Jesus and the resurrection caused the philosophers to characterize him as "a chatterer," "a gossip," "a trifler."

So, on Mars' hill, when he spoke of Jesus and the resurrection, "some mocked." The word signifies "to throw out the lip." When Paul preached on Mars' hill, before the highest judicial court of Athens, some jeered. How his courage must have been tried! Others, however, were respectful (Acts xvii. 32), and expressed a desire and determination to hear him again on this subject. A few con-

verts, we know, were gained. The names of some are given, but we do not read in the New Testament of the Church of God in Athens. The preacher, however, enjoyed the sweet consciousness of duty performed under trying circumstances, and the sermon delivered that day in the capital of Greece, before an audience of jeering idolators, has been heard by myriads through all the intervening centuries, and we to-day come together that we may listen to and consider reverently the command that comes from God to all men everywhere to repent of sin.

This was no new duty for the first time made known by Paul. The prophets had proclaimed repentance. Again and again, in the former dispensation, this had been solemnly enjoined on sinful men; as well as in the preaching of John the Baptist, Jesus, the twelve and the seventy. The burden of their preaching was the duty of repentance in view of the approaching reign of heaven.

The importance of repentance is constantly presented in the Old Testament and in the New. On one occasion some persons approached

Jesus for the purpose of calling his attention to certain Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled, as they said, with their religious offerings. They probably spoke to Him also about eighteen men who had lost their lives by the fall of the tower in Siloam. Jesus told them that if they thought the persons to whom they referred were sinners above all the Galileans, or above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem, they were in error. "Except ye repent," He said (Luke xiii. 3, 5), "ye shall all likewise perish." This was equivalent to, "you must repent or perish." "Except" as Jesus used it, signifies the same as "must." Take, as an example, language used in His conversation with Nicodemus. To this erudite rabbi Jesus said (John iii. 3), "Except a man be born again he can not see the kingdom of God." And again He said (John iii. 5), "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." But further along in the interview Jesus is represented as saying (John iii. 7), "Marvel not that I said unto thee ye must be born again." In these words He explains his meaning when above he said

"except a man be born again," "except a man be born of water," etc. He only, however, said "ye must be born again." when he employed the language quoted from verses 3 and 5.

The Master said also (Luke xxiv. 47) that "repentance and remission of sins" should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. In these words our Lord places repentance before remission as a condition. He joins them together as condition and consequent, and "what God hath joined together let no man put asunder." No man has a right to expect for himself, or to offer to another, forgiveness without repentance.

Simon Peter so understood the subject, for when he preached "remission of sins" in Jerusalem (Acts ii. 38) he named repentance as a condition. Happily the teaching of the New Testament is so plain on this point that there is among Christians but one voice—no repentance, no remission.

But what is repentance? Let the fact be noted that words in the Bible, as in other literature, ancient and modern, sacred and secular, are not used always and everywhere

in exactly the same sense. A word is used, sometimes in a broader, sometimes in a narrower signification. In a certain connection a word signifies apparently almost the opposite of the meaning which it bears in another connection. There is probably no exception to this statement concerning various significations to be found in the use of any word in the Bible. The meaning of a word depends largely on the connection in which it stands. Take the most common Bible words, and see that this is true. Look, if you please, at the words "faith," "conversion," "regeneration," and even the word "baptism." There is, of course, in each of these words a root-meaning which is to be found in some way and to some extent in all of its occurrences. But there are shades of meaning, and sometimes the variations are very marked, as before intimated, which depend upon the connection in which the term is employed. In attempting, therefore, to discover the specific duty enjoined by the command to repent, let us not lose sight of this fact. To tell what repentance is not, is an easy task.

First, Repentance is not simply sorrow. The people to whom Simon Peter preached with such wonderful power in Jerusalem on the great Pentecost occasion, were very sorry when they cried out (Acts ii. 37), "Men! Brethren! What must we do!" He commanded them to repent. More, then, than simply sorrow is required, when God issues his command to all men everywhere.

Second, Nor is repentance the same as godly sorrow. Paul tells us (II. Cor. vii. 10) that "godly sorrow worketh repentance," but if it works repentance, it is not the experience called repentance any more than a road leading to a given place is the place itself.

Third, Repentance is not reformation. The original word is never so translated, in our common English version, although in "The Living Oracles," an edition of the New Testament compiled by Alexander Campbell from translations made by George Campbell, Philip Doddridge and James McKnight, the words "reform" and "reformation" are used instead of the words repent and repentance.

Paul preached the word to the jailer and

his house in Philippi. When one preaches the Word of the Lord he proclaims, of necessity, repentance. Isaiah predicted (chap. ii. verse 3) that the Word of the Lord would go forth from Jerusalem. The Master said (Luke xxiv. 47) that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name "among all nations beginning at Jerusalem." Luke says (Acts xvi. 32) that Paul preached "the Word of the Lord" to the jailer and to all who were in his house. There can be no doubt that he commanded this man to repent, nor can there be any doubt that he repented. Now, whatever repentance is, the command can be obeyed in a very short time. "The same hour of the night" (Acts xvi. 33) this poor ignorant pagan was baptized, but will anyone claim that he was baptized before he repented? His bearing toward Paul and Silas shows that a radical change had come over him. A few hours before, having received a charge to keep these men safely (Acts xvi. 23), he threw (verse 24) them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks. But now—how tender! He washes their stripes; he spreads a table for them (verse 34).

If ever a man gave evidence of genuine evangelical repentance the prison keeper in Philippi did so. But he repented in less than an hour. He certainly repented before he was baptized. But he was baptized the same hour in which he brought Paul and Silas out of the prison and inquired what he must do to be saved. There was no time for reformation, there was time for repentance, therefore repentance is not the same as reformation.

The same statement may be made with equal truth concerning the three thousand in Jerusalem, who, in a single day, entered the way of salvation. They were told to repent (Acts ii. 38), and they did repent. They repented in less than a day. Their repentance preceded their baptism, but (Acts ii. 41) they that "gladly received the word" of the preacher were baptized, so that the same day three thousand were added to the original one hundred and twenty. There was time here for repentance, but not for reformation of life.

Repentance, however, must issue in reformation. John the Baptist told the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism (Matt. iii. 8)

to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. He told the men who had two coats to give to those who had none (Luke iii. 11). He told the publicans to exact no more than belonged to them (Luke iii. 13). He required soldiers to do violence to no man, and to be content with their wages (Luke iii. 14). These instructions were in immediate connection with his exhortation to bring forth fruits meet for repentance (Luke iii. 8), and showed the character of the reformation which follows a genuine evangelical repentance.

Reformation must follow repentance. Zaccheus said (Luke xix, 8) that half of his goods he would give to the poor, and if he had taken anything from any man by false accusation, he would restore fourfold. Jesus was so well pleased with this state of mind that he commended Zaccheus (Luke xix. 9).

Reformation must follow repentance. When the people of Ephesus repented under the preaching of Paul, those who had used curious arts (Acts xix. 19) brought their books together and burned them before all men. In this significant manner they declared their obedience

—their determination to reform their lives.

In the experience called repentance, one takes the following steps: First, There is a knowledge of sin. Second, There is a sorrow over sin. Third, There is a desire to amend one's ways. Fourth, There is a determination, God helping, to (Isaiah i. 16, 17) "cease to do evil," to "learn to do well." It is only when the human will submits to the Divine will that the command to repent is obeyed.

Evangelical repentance, the repentance enjoined in the Gospel, the repentance which is unto life, may be defined as a change of mind. Specifically, a change of the part of the mind denominated the will. A change produced by sorrow for sin. A change so thorough as to lead to reformation of life. In one sentence then, repentance is a change of the will toward God, produced by sorrow for sin, and issuing in a new life.

The motive to repentance is, according to Paul (Rom. ii. 4,) "the goodness of God," the goodness of God is exhibited in the Gospel of his grace. The Gospel message tells us that God so loved the world as to give his Son.

The same Bible tells us (Rom. v. 8) that "God commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." In the First Epistle of John (iv. 19) "the beloved" disciple explains that our love to God, and consequent submission to him, is a result of his love to us. It is in this way that men are moved to the experience which is called repentance, out of which comes reformation of life.

It is probably for this reason that repentance is spoken of as a gift (Acts v. 31) by Simon Peter when he says that God exalted Jesus to be a Prince and a Saviour "to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." God gives repentance by giving exhibitions of his goodness calculated to move men to repentance.

The duty of which I have been speaking is by no means limited to those who are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. When Simon, the sorcerer, who was baptized in Samaria by Philip, the evangelist, (Acts viii. 13) fell into sin he was told (Acts viii. 22) to repent of his wickedness. He was a baptized

believer, but weak and sinful. So also in the Epistles of the Seven Churches (Rev. ii. and iii.) comes again and again from the head of the body an admonition to repent (See Rev. ii. 5,16, 21, and iii. 3). So that the command described as being for "all men everywhere" is to be interpreted in the largest way. "All men everywhere" includes men in the church and men out of the church—men out of the church and men in the church includes all who sin.

God help us so to consider his goodness that we will be moved to sincerely repent of our sins from day to day, and to confess the same, thus continually growing in grace, and becoming more and morettruly children of God. Amen.

CONFESSION UNTO SALVATION.

"With the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Rom. x. 10.

Paul in this place locates a confession of belief before salvation, and names such confession as a condition of deliverance from sin. The preposition immediately preceding the word salvation indicates motion or movement toward. The confession of the mouth with a heart faith that God hath raised Jesus from the dead, is a step in the direction of salvation.

The faith contemplated in this statement is a belief in the heart—with the heart man believeth unto righteousness (Rom. x. 10). A mere intellectual reception of the proposition as true is not the faith which results in righteousness. Such a faith, so far as salvation is concerned, is dead. In the memorabilia of John (John xii. 42, 43) we are told that many of the chief rulers believed on the Christ,

but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him. The difficulty with the faith of the chief rulers in this case was that it did not enlist their affection—they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. In other words, the chief rulers did not believe on Christ with the heart.

While it is true that without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. xi. 6), it is also true that faith alone does not suit his demands. There must be more than simple belief on the part of any who are determined to please God. There must be, at least, in addition to this, confession with the mouth. There is not so much as an intimation on the part of Jesus, or any whom he authorized to speak for him, that a simple belief, that a simple intellectual apprehension of facts and truths, is all that is required in order to acceptance with God. The people in Jerusalem, on the great Pentecost day, who inquired what to do in order to obtain remission of sins, believed as a result of the argument which they had just heard that God had raised Jesus from the dead, and they believed that he was both

Lord and Christ. Now, why did not the preacher tell these anxious inquirers that this was quite sufficient—that they already had remission. He commanded them in addition to their faith (Acts ii. 38) to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.

James says (James ii. 26) that faith without works is dead. Abraham was justified by faith, but (James ii. 21) it was when he offered Isaac, his son, on the altar. It was then (James ii. 23) that the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God.

Paul condemned men (Titus i. 16) who professed to know God, but who, in their lives, were disobedient. He says that such persons really deny God. They are characterized by him as damnable and reprobate. You would not infer from what Paul says in this passage that he intended to teach that if a man simply believed certain propositions, such as that God raised Jesus from the dead, he would, in that instant, and on that condition alone, enter into a state of salvation.

In the roll-call of the faithful, in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, every person named as a hero of faith is represented as being promptly and fully obedient to God, and this obedience alone was sufficient evidence of the sincerity of their faith.

And is it not Paul who in our text to-day declares that in addition to a belief, even in the heart, that God raised Jesus from the dead, there must be a confession with the mouth in order to salvation?

Jesus taught that a public confession was a condition of acceptance when he said to the twelve, as he sent them out the first time (Matt. x. 32), that whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven, but whosoever shall deny me (that is, disavow me) before men, him will I also deny (that is, disavow, reject) before my Father in heaven. The Son of God not only requires men to believe, but to confess. During His personal ministry among men, the Jews understood the importance of a confession with the mouth, for they agreed (John ix. 22) that if any man did confess

that Jesus was the Christ he should be put out of the synagogue.

In Cæsarea Philippi Jesus inquired of his disciples (Matt. xvi. 13), Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? The replies were as various as were the opinions of the people. The question is, after a time, repeated with greater definiteness (Matt. xvi. 15), But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter (verse 16) answered and said Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Now, what was the Master's estimate of this confession? Was He pleased or displeased with the declaration of faith made by Simon Peter? His own words contain the answer to this inquiry. Jesus answered (Matt. xvi. 17, 18) and said unto him Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The truth stated in the confession of faith made by Simon Peter was so important, was a truth of so much value, that the Son of Man

at once declared his purpose to build his church on it as on a rock against which the gates of hell would never prevail.

Much time has been spent in discussing whether Jesus said that on Peter he would build his church. We have no minutes to spend in a war of words, a mere logomachy. What saith the Scriptures? Is it affirmed in any part of the New Testament that the Church of Christ rests on Simon Peter as its foundation? Paul is very explicit. He says (I. Cor. iii. 11) that other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. In this connection, he is speaking of the church under the similitude of a building. Men are warned as to how they build on this foundation. These words of Paul alone ought to be sufficient to settle the question as to Peter being the foundation on which our Lord said he would build his church. Not Peter, but Christ.

In another passage (Ephesians ii. 20) Paul says that saints are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets; Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. This

is enough from Paul on this point. What has Peter to say?

Speaking (I. Peter ii. 5) of the elect as constituting a spiritual house, he says they come unto a living stone (verse 4), and that Jehovah declares in Scripture (verse 6) Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious. Now, this stone was a person, for he immediately adds: He that believeth on (not *it*, but) *him* shall not be put to shame. Peter did not think of himself as the rock on which the spiritual house, the true temple of God, was built, so he expressly says that the Christ was himself the stone which being rejected of men was chosen of God as the foundation.

Read the sermons reported in the Book of Acts. The foundations of the churches were laid in the cities of Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Philippi, Ephesus, Galatia, Thessalonica, Rome. In the discourses reported in the Book of Acts is Peter presented as the foundation? Name the preacher who in those days preached Peter as the object of faith. In which city is there even an allusion to him as the foundation on which the church was to be, or was,

built? Nowhere. By whom were men required to believe on or confess Peter?

In this way plain people, unacquainted with metaphysics, ignorant of Greek, are able to settle this vexed question for themselves, where men of learning and critical acumen are puzzled.

In the words of the Master to his disciples in Cæsarea Philippi we are taught the substance of the confession. Peter said (Matt. xvi. 16), Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Let us gather up the various confessions of faith found in the New Testament, and, adding them together, seek to discover the confession with which our Lord will be pleased.

Nathanæl said (John i. 49) to Jesus, Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel. Martha, the sister of Lazarus, said (John xi. 27), I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. As we have seen (John ix. 22), the Jews determined that if any member of one of their synagogues confessed that Jesus was the Christ they would excommunicate him. At the bap-

tism of Jesus, God declared (Matt. iii. 17) This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. On the mount of transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 5) God made the same declaration, adding the words, Hear ye Him. A familiar passage in the 8th chapter of the Book of Acts, the confession of the Ethiopian, will not be quoted because it is universally regarded as spurious. The Canterbury critics do not give it a place in the revised New Testament, but such an interpolation, introduced certainly at an early period, suggests the character of the faith and confession which in the beginning of Christianity were required in order to baptism. In the First Epistle of John (iv. 2, 3) we are told that every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, while every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God, and this refusal to confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is characterized as anti-Christ. This is that spirit of anti-Christ whereof ye have heard that it should come.

On another occasion than the one of which we have spoken, Simon Peter made an im-

portant confession. It was after the discourse in the synagogue in Capernaum (John vi. 24-59) on the living bread, and on eating His body and drinking his blood, which gave such offence to some of his disciples that they went back and walked no more with him. At this juncture, turning to the twelve (verse 67), Jesus said, Will ye also go away? Simon Peter answered (verses 68,69) Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God—or, as it is in the revised version, Thou art the Holy One of God.

The confession of Thomas must not be passed by. This disciple, who was called Didymus, had said when his brethren told him that Jesus was alive (John xx. 25), "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." But when Jesus came to a meeting where Thomas was and said (John xx. 27), "Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my

side; and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas answered (verse 28), "My Lord and my God." The Master received the declaration as something to which he was entitled, and added (verse 29), "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." The late Prof. Schaff said ("Creeds of Christendom," Vol. II., page 5), that this is the strongest apostolic confession of faith in the Lordship and Divinity of Christ. Concerning the confession of Peter (Matt. xvi. 16), the same author said (Vol. II., page 4) that this is the fundamental Christian confession and the rock on which the church is built.

Collecting these various statements, and reading them together to the end that we may have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, the conclusion is reached that our Lord requires those who would become his disciples to believe in and confess him as a man, as the Son of man, as the Christ, as the anointed of the Father, anointed, as it is said (Acts x. 38), with the Holy Spirit and with power as the Son of God.

The belief embodied in the confession is of the heart—since with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. An unobjectionable form, therefore, is the following: I believe in my heart that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Such a declaration means, also, that I take Jesus as my Saviour and I desire to obey him. To confess Christ truly, is to surrender to him soul, body and spirit—is to enter into a solemn covenant to be his. Whoever intelligently confesses Christ with the mouth before men, places himself in agreement with him. This is involved in the word translated confess and confession. The word is defined thus: To speak or say the same with another, to say the same things; that is, to assent, to accord, to agree with. There is in the word the idea of reconciliation, harmony. When Jesus is confessed, the confessor places himself in accord with Christ. a reconelliation is effected, the Son of God is victorious, the confessor surrenders.

For one to confess Christ, as here described, is to confess one's sins. It is impossible to say intelligently and sincerely, I believe in my

heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, without, at the same time, making an acknowledgment of one's sins, and confessing the need of a Divine Saviour.

There is not a more solemn act in which a man can engage than to confess Christ. There ought to be no surprise felt that Paul spoke of the confession as unto salvation. When correctly understood, and when made as the New Testament requires, it is in fact a step in the direction of spiritual help.

Why not confess Christ? Why not confess Christ now? He confessed that he was the Son of God, and for that confession was put to death. You may confess that he is the Son of God, and for that confession move in the direction of life. Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all them that put their trust in him.

"My faith would lay her hand
Oh that dear head of Thine,
While like a penitent I stand
And thus confess my sin."

BAPTISM AND SALVATION.

"Baptism doth also now save us."—I. Peter iii. 21.

I wonder why it is that in the evangelistic meetings of the present time baptism is passed over in silence. It was not so in the apostolic times. Is it because the ordinance has been abused by certain teachers of Christianity? But what doctrine of the New Testament has not been perverted! Certainly, it will not be contended that the pulpit ought to be silent on all subjects mentioned in the New Testament which have been misinterpreted and misapplied. Jesus and the apostles spoke of baptism, and so ought we, and in speaking we ought to say what they said. This course, I am persuaded, will please Jesus and be entirely satisfactory to all true believers.

All Christians believe the statement made by Simon Peter which has been selected as the text of the present discourse. His proposition

is true. This we all believe. "Baptism saves us." To deny this proposition is to deny a statement made by a man whom evangelical believers hold to have been inspired by the Holy Ghost. It would be an insult to your faith, beloved in the Lord, to argue, for even a moment, that the Apostle spoke the truth when he uttered the words concerning baptism quoted as the text of this sermon.

But is this a baptism in water? It is. It is something which might be mistaken for the putting away of the filth of the flesh, and so the writer explains that baptism is not this. No one would, or could, thus mistake a baptism in the Holy Spirit. The baptism of which Simon Peter speaks in this place must, therefore, be a baptism in water.

Albert Barnes says in his note on this text: "As Noah was saved by water, so there is a sense in which water is instrumental in our salvation. The mention of water in the case of Noah in connection with his being saved, by an obvious association, suggested to the mind of the Apostle the use of water in our salvation, and hence led him to make the remark

about the connection of baptism with our salvation."

Can the form of baptism be determined by the context? It can. No one would think for an instant that the application of a drop of water to the forehead in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, could be for the purpose of putting away the filth of the flesh. Immersion might be mistaken for this by very ignorant people, but affusion never. The statement of the context harmonizes with immersion, but it is out of harmony with any other act which has been called baptism. Baptism is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh."

Now, it is altogether legitimate to inquire into the sense in which baptism saves. In some sense baptism saves us. Peter so affirms, and we subscribe to his affirmation. This text seems to some to be out of harmony with other passages in which the subject of salvation is treated—in which the conditions of salvation are named. As illustrations the following texts are quoted: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that

believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 26). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). "Be not afraid, only believe" (Mark v. 36). "Believe only, and she shall be made whole" (Luke viii. 50). "Through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

The value of faith has been presented in a previous discourse, so that it is not at all necessary in this sermon to say anything on that subject. To exaggerate the worth of faith would be an exceedingly difficult undertaking.

The fact is, salvation in the New Testament is attributed to quite a number of things. Look at the following: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8). "God hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace" (II. Tim. i. 9). "Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy, he

saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus iii. 5). "Save yourselves" (Acts ii. 40). "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philip ii. 12). "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin" (I. John i. 7). "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. i. 16). There is a repentance, as we have seen in a previous discourse, which is unto salvation (II. Cor. ii. 10). The grace of God brings salvation (Titus ii. 11). The long-suffering of the Lord is salvation (II. Peter iii. 15). "He that endureth unto the end the same shall be saved" (Matt. x. 22). "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. ii. 10).

These are some of the texts which may be quoted from the New Testament in which salvation is ascribed to a number of persons, acts, and things. How can these statements be placed in harmonious relations? In this way: "We are saved by grace as the moving cause; by Jesus as the efficient cause; by his death, resurrection, and life, as the procuring cause; by faith as the formal cause; by baptism

as the immediate cause; and by enduring to the end, or persevering in the Lord, as the concurring cause" ("The Christian System," page 249).

An illustration may be quoted which will present this subject in a still clearer light. "A gentleman on the sea-shore descries the wreck of a vessel at some distance from land, driving out into the ocean, and covered with a miserable and perishing sea-drenched crew. Moved by pure philanthropy, he sends his son in a boat to save them. When the boat arrives at the wreck, he invites them in, upon this condition: that they submit to his guidance. A number of the crew stretch out their arms, and, seizing the boat with their hands, spring into it, take hold of the oars, and row to land, while some, from cowardice, and others because of some difficulty in coming to the boat, wait the expectation of a second trip; but before it returned, the wreck went to pieces, and they all perished. The *moving* cause of the salvation of those who escaped was the good-will of the gentleman on the shore; the son, who took the boat, was the

efficient cause; the boat itself, the *procuring* cause; the knowledge of their perishing condition, and his invitation, the *disposing* cause; the seizing of the boat with their hands, and springing into it, the *immediate* cause; their consenting to his condition, the *formal* cause; and their rowing to shore, under the guidance of his son, was the *concurring* cause of their salvation. Thus men are justified or saved by grace, by Christ, by his blood, by faith, by knowledge, by the name of the Lord, and by works." (See "The Christian System," page 248).

In some quarters there has been an inclination to make too much of baptism. Many reasons may be given for this, but one must suffice for the present. To simply quote a few texts will show how very easy it is to unduly exalt this ordinance. Read only the following: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved" (Mark xvi. 16). "The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves not being baptized of John" (Luke vii. 30). "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the

remission of sins" (Acts ii. 38). "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts xxii. 16). "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God" (John iii. 5). "Baptism doth also now save us" (I. Peter iii. 21).

These quotations indicate how easy it is to overestimate the importance of baptism. These are also the texts which are supposed to teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration—a doctrine most abhorrent to the spirit and general current of Bible teaching. In every instance in which baptism is represented as having a connection with salvation, it is represented also as being preceded by faith and repentance. Baptism without faith in Jesus, baptism without repentance toward God, baptism without a new heart, is of no avail whatever. Except as an expression of faith and penitence and a new heart, baptism is a meaningless ceremony — a mere form. While the texts quoted give a certain value to baptism, which ought to be brought out in the preaching of the Gospel, it still remains true, as Alexander

Campbell said in his debate with Mr. Rice (page 545), that "the fundamental, the capital point," is the turning of the heart to God. Mr. Campbell also said in this connection that "if a person were to be immersed twice seven times in the Jordan for the remission of his sins, or for the reception of the Holy Spirit, it would avail nothing more than the wetting of the face of a babe unless his heart is changed by the Word and Spirit of God."

Baptism alone does not save any person in any sense. The simple act of immersing one is not Christian baptism. Give attention, please, at this point, to a few negative propositions to the end that the text may be made apparent to every one.

First, Baptism without faith does not save. Why? Because the Master says (Matt. xvi. 16), "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Because Paul says (Rom. xiv. 23) that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Because the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews (Heb. xi. 6) says that "without faith it is impossible to please God."

Second, Baptism without repentance does not

save. Why? Because the Master said (Luke xxiv. 47) that "repentance and remission of sins" were to be preached in his name among all nations. Because Simon Peter said, immediately after he had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and when speaking as the Spirit gave him utterance (Acts ii. 38) that men should "repent" as well as "be baptized for the remission of sins." Because the Son of man himself said (Luke xiii. 3-5), "Except ye repent ye shall perish."

Third, Baptism does not save without a confession of Christ. Why? Because Jesus says (Matt. x. 32, 33), "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Because John says (I. John iv. 3), "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." Because Paul says (Rom. x. 10), "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Fourth, Baptism does not save without prayer. Why? Because Ananias, specially

called of God and sent to Saul of Tarsus, told him (Acts xxii. 16) to arise and be baptized, and wash away his sins calling on the name of the Lord. Because Joel, Peter, and Paul (Joel ii. 32; Acts ii. 21; Rom. x. 13), say that "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." In whatever sense, then, baptism saves, it is absolutely certain that it does not save without faith, that it does not save without repentance, that it does not save without confession, that it does not save without prayer.

Fifth, It has already been said in effect that baptism does not save without a clean heart, but let this thought stand out as the fifth proposition in this series. In whatever sense baptism saves, it does not save without a clean heart. This must be true since (Matt. xv. 19) "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." This must be true, because the writer of the twenty-fourth Psalm says that a condition of ascending into the hill of the Lord, and of standing in his holy place (verse 4), is "a pure heart." This must

be true, because Jesus says (Matt. v. 8) that "The pure in heart" are blessed in that "they shall see God," and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says (Heb. xii. 14), "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Add two more propositions, separate and distinct, to those already considered.

First, There is no virtue in water to cleanse from sin. There is no more virtue in the waters of baptism to cleanse the soul from sin than there was virtue in the water of the river Jordan to cleanse the body of Naaman from leprosy. You remember that when the prophet of God, Elisha, said to the "captain of the hosts of the king of Syria" (II. Kings v. 1, 10, 11), "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean," Naaman was wroth and said (verse 12): "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" It is probable that the captain was right. It is likely that the pure, clean, cool waters of Abana and Pharpar were better, as water, than the waters of Jordan, but he was in error in thinking that there was *any*

water sufficient to effect a cure of leprosy. Naaman, however, was no more in error on this point than is the man who thinks that there is virtue in the waters of baptism to cleanse the soul from the defilement of sin. God, in his grace and mercy, suspended the physical cure of the captain of the host of the king of Syria on faith in and obedience to him. The specific command was to "wash seven times." The Divine promise was "thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean." What was the immediate result? The immediate result was that when "Naaman dipped himself seven times in Jordan (II. Kings v. 14) according to the saying of the man of God, his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child and he was clean." This result was when he "dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God," not when he dipped himself once, or twice, or three times, or four times, or five times, or even six times, but when he "dipped himself seven times in Jordan according to the saying of the man of God."

Exact and full obedience is what God

requires. The cure of Naaman was by faith. This belief was the result of words spoken, in the first place, by the little maid. This faith was the result of words of entreaty spoken by the body servant of the afflicted man. By the testimony of the servant girl, Elisha, the prophet, and the faithful body servant of Naaman, the "great" man believed so far as to venture to do the thing required. His faith thus generated led to obedience, and his obedience to salvation.

The cure was also by grace. The grace of God toward this "great man," "honorable and mighty," as he is called (II. Kings v. 1), was exhibited in the first place in the words spoken by Elisha, and in the second place by the cure which followed obedience to the word of God by the prophet. Naaman was saved from his physical condition by the mercy of God. When? When he dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God. Naaman realized this fact and was very grateful. So filled with gratitude was he that he offered to pay the prophet, but Elisha declined to receive Naaman's gifts.

When the captain left his home to call on the prophet that he might, as the little Jewish servant girl had said to her mistress, "be recovered (I. Kings v. 3) of his leprosy," he took with him "ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment." He expected to pay a good round sum for his cure. He had no thought of being saved by the abundant mercy and free grace of God. There was no virtue in the water. The healing virtue was in God, and in him alone. He alone could save Naaman—he alone did save him. But there was quite as much virtue in the water in this case as there is virtue in water when "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ," affirms that "baptism doth now save us"—that is, none at all.

Take another illustration Jesus said to the man who was blind from his birth (John ix. 7), "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (verse 7). He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing." Before the command to "go, wash in the pool of Siloam," Jesus spat on the ground, made clay of the spittle, and

anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay." After Jesus had done his part, he told the afflicted man to do his part, and the poor man obeyed. Result? He came seeing." Was there virtue in the clay? No. In the spittle? Not a bit. In the water? None at all. The power to open the eyes of the blind man was in the Healer.

So also there is no virtue in the water, nor virtue in the act of baptism to make one whole. from the disease and defilement of sin, but the power to make clean—and the only power—is of God. He saves, but he proposes to save men from sin on certain plainly specified conditions. Let these remarks suffice on this point.

Baptism is an act which marks a transition. The word is followed by a preposition which signifies motion from a given point toward a given point. In the great commission, for instance, as given by Matthew (Matt. xxviii. 19), baptism is into, not merely in, but into, the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. On this point, happily, at the present time, there is practically no difference of opinion.

The preposition *eis,* in this passage, is translated "into" by the American Bible Union, and by the Canterbury critics, in the revised New Testament. Dr. John A. Broadus, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, says, in his excellent "Commentary on Matthew," that this "is the most obvious and commonest translation of the Greek phrase *eis to onoma.*" He also calls attention to the fact that "the same preposition and case are found after baptize in Acts viii. 16; xix. 5; I. Cor. i. 13, and (with other nouns) in Gal. iii. 27; Rom. vi. 3 (twice) and I. Cor. x. 2."

Dr. Broadus also says that "to have this ceremony performed upon ourselves in the name of Jesus Christ, or in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is a sort of oath of allegiance or pledge of devotion to him as our Saviour and our guide; we are not baptized unto Moses, or unto Paul, but unto Christ, unto the Trinity. Hence it was a pleasant fancy of the early Latin Christians to call baptism a *sacramentum,* the Roman soldiers' oath of absolute devotion and obedience to his general; though the word sacrament

afterwards came to be gradually employed in applications and senses quite foreign to the New Testament."

Now, the New Testament authorizes the belief that when one in baptism takes this oath of allegiance to him who has all power in heaven and on earth; that when the penitent, in baptism signs, as it were, a pledge of devotion to the Christ, he obtains an evidence of acceptance with God which he had not before, and which can not be obtained in any other way. He can point to the words of his Master (Mark xvi. 16), "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," and say, with a humble boldness, "This promise now applies to me."

The believing penitent is baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. By being baptized, he comes into a new relation to this Trinity. Before men he recognizes formally and solemnly God as his father, the Son of God as his mediator and Saviour, and the Holy Spirit as his guide, comforter, and sanctifier. The preposition, *eis,* in this place, marks this transition, this change of relation.

We are said (Rom. vi. 3) to be "baptized into the death of Christ." The first great fact of the Gospel (I. Cor. xv. 3) is the fact that Jesus died for our sins, according to the Old Testament Scriptures. We are said to be "redeemed" (I. Peter i. 19) "with the precious blood of Christ;" and John, the Beloved, says (I. John i. 7) that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

This, however, on condition that we "walk in the light." The blood of Jesus Christ makes clean only those who believe in him. At what point in their experience? When the faith is so thorough as to result in an open, unconditional, absolute surrender to Christ. "Here, Lord, I give myself to thee." Baptism is the ordinance Divinely appointed to mark this surrender. Hence, the person who sincerely and intelligently gives himself to Christ in this solemn service may be said to be saved by baptism.

The idea of transition seems to have been in the mind of the apostle when he said (I. Peter iii. 21) that "baptism does also now save us," since he alludes (verse 20) to the fact

that "eight souls were saved by water," in "the days of Noah." They could only be saved by water in the sense that, by this element, they were carried over from the old world of sin and death to the new world of righteousness and life. So one in baptism comes out from the world of disobedience and death, and openly identifies himself with the new world of obedience and life.

But I am not certain that in anything yet said, the precise meaning of the man of God in our text has been presented. Thus far we have dealt with the subject in a general way; let us attempt to discover the exact meaning of the text.

To whom does Peter say baptism does also now save us? He speaks (I. Peter i. 1) to the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father; to a chosen (I. Peter ii. 9) generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. He addresses those who (I. Peter ii. 10) in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Simon Peter says to good men and women, to those

who had purified their souls, (I. Peter i. 22) in obedience to the truth, that baptism doth also now save us. He seems to even identify himself in this matter of salvation with those to whom he writes.

In what condition, let us next consider, were those to whom the words of the text are addressed?

Answer: Their faith was being sorely tried (I. Peter i. 7). Enemies were before them, behind them, on the right and on the left of them—enemies were all about them. He speaks of their temptations (I. Peter i. 6) as manifold. He assures them that when they patiently suffer for doing well (I. Peter ii. 21) God is well pleased. Christ, in these bitter experiences, is to be taken as an example. Think it not strange, he says, (I. Peter iv. 12) that you are required to pass through this fiery trial, but rather rejoice that ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings. But let none of you, suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busy-body in other men's matters (I. Peter iv. 15).

From the beginning to the end of this epistle

the evidence is indisputable that the writer had in his mind and addressed Christian men under trial because of their Christian faith.

What purpose had he in view? The encouragement of well-doing of his sorely tried brethren. He declares in his second epistle (II. Peter iii. 1, 2) that he writes both epistles to stir up their pure minds to a remembrance of the words spoken by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. This was simply doing what his Master years before commanded. The Christ, in view of Peter's fall and recovery, told him (Luke xxii. 32) that when he was turned again, he should turn his brethren. This he does in the two epistles which bear his name.

It is easy with the place, nature, and functions of baptism, as represented in the New Testament, to see how, in their trials, remembrance of their experiences at the time of their baptism, their deep contrition, their openly avowed trust in the Son of God, their sincere purpose and solemn covenant to be Christ's and to do his will, with an assurance

from him of his gracious acceptance of them, with his promise of Divine assistance in all the way of life—it is easy, I say, to see how a recollection of these things would encourage them in the midst of their trials, and nerve them to endure to the end however great and constant their sufferings, and in this way they would be saved now by their baptism.

There is no time remaining in which to argue this point, nor does it seem to be necessary.

You are only exhorted in the concluding moments of this sermon, in time of despondency, of disquiet, of discouragement, of temptation and trial, to recall your experiences, your solemn vows, sincerely made, and the rest which came with the utter and absolute surrender to Christ in baptism, testifying in a way that you could not misunderstand your peace with God and gracious adoption into his family—you are exhorted to this recollection that you may learn by experience that baptism doth also now save us.

THE NECESSARY FRUIT OF CHRISTIANITY.

"By their fruits ye shall know them."—Matt. vii. 20.

It is a singular revelation of the extraordinary depravity of human nature that at a time when Christianity is exhibiting a charity almost without limit, a charity, too, in perfect accord with the teaching of Christ, there should be found men of such depravity as to assault the religion of Jesus at the very point at which one would suppose it most commends itself. At a time when Christians are pouring out money without stint to relieve, without regard to religious connections, or professions, the poor in our cities; where, under the influence of Christian principles, have been established more benevolent institutions, hospitals, and orphan asylums, open to atheists, infidels, and all classes without distinction of sect, than in any other part of the world—at such a time certain haters and traducers of Christianity

send forth a circular, on one side of which is the picture of the Word of God, open and with this inscription:

"Holy Bible, book divine,
In which true faith and doctrine shine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine!
If you have no Bible be sure to get one."

Then follows: "Find the verses on the back of this card, and you will learn the kind of precious morality, temperance and kindness, 'the holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' The results of which are that the unfortunate, aged and helpless are neglected, while vast sums of money are wasted on fulsomely flattering the three mystical monsters of this Book, in hopes of avoiding their imaginary curses and gaining their doubtful favors."

On the other side are verses wrested from their context, from the sixty-six books of the Bible, covering a period of nearly two thousand years, including histories of many wars and descriptions of different degrees of civilization, selected exclusively for the purpose of misrepresenting the general spirit of the Book.

Accompanying this is a circular addressed "To the Clergy and their supporters." It is professedly issued by the Board of Directors of the American Secular Union. The grade of intellect may be inferred from the following conclusive proof, in their opinion, that there is no God: "Look at the vast numbers that contribute to build up and expensively decorate, furnish, and support places that their Divine Owner cares so little about that they will burn down if the tax-payers' fire department does not put them out."

Benighted and malignant wretches! in the midst of a civilization which, though confessedly imperfect, is a marvelous advance upon any attained on a large scale in the history of the world, they stand making faces and muttering oaths.

If any additional evidence were needed to show the deep, dark, damning depravity of the human heart, these facts ought to be quite sufficient.

My purpose in this discourse is to show the necessary fruit of the teaching of Christianity. In a subsequent sermon the fruit of

Christianity will be shown by an array of facts, but in this our attention will be turned to the teaching of Christianity, and our inquiry will relate to the necessary result among men of this doctrine.

The Master in the Sermon on the Mount has formulated a rule by which a reasonable, just and accurate conclusion may be reached as to the Divine origin and nature and infinitely glorious purposes of our holy religion. In two places in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus declares that by their fruits false prophets are to be known. In appearance these prophets are as harmless as sheep, but within they are ravening wolves. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. A good tree produces, as all men know, good fruit, while a corrupt tree, as is universally recognized, produces evil fruit. It is impossible that a good tree should produce evil fruit, and equally impossible that a corrupt tree should bring forth good fruit. By their fruits trees are known. By their fruits prophets are known to be either good or bad. So by their fruits the teachings of the religions of the

earth may be known to be either divine or human in their originaand purpose. Let the Christian religion be tried by this standard. No believer need tremble in apprehension of a possibly disastrous result.

What is the teaching of Christianity according to Christ concerning the results of sin? Does the teaching of Jesus and his apostles on this point encourage men to live in the habitual transgression of law? A summary statement may be found in the Epistle to the Romans (Rom. vi. 23), "The wages of sin is death," and this declaration is in perfect accord with the entire teaching of the Old Testament and the New, with the entire doctrine of Moses and the prophets, of Jesus and the apostles. Concerning the result of sin, there is not a dissentient voice, neither in the Law, the Prophets, the Psalms nor the Apocalypse. Always and everywhere, from the first word of Genesis to the last word of Revelation, the declaration made with a divine emphasis in some form is that the wages of sin is death; that the soul that sinneth shall die. Need I inquire whether there is in this fact an

encouragement to men to sin against themselves, against their fellow-beings, or against the God who made them? What must be the result, the necessary result, of this teaching?

What, I inquire again, is a necessary result of the teaching of Christianity according to Christ, concerning of lives of righteousness?

We read in the Book in which alone is an authoritative statement of the facts, truths, principles, precepts, commands, promises, warnings of our holy religion that (I. Tim. iv. 8) godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of the life that is to come.

Here again is a voice sounding as revelation progresses from its Alpha to its Omega, with an ever deepening tone. There is no question that the teaching of the Bible is that here and now in this world, as well as there and then in the world to come, righteousness of heart, of speech, of conduct, pays. The Old Testament is full of the thought that righteousness is rewarded in this life. The New Testament teaches the same doctrine. Here and now among men it

pays to live uprightly, to live as in the sight of God.

As to the hereafter, Christianity declares (I. Cor. ii. 9) that eye hath not seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart to conceive the things that God hath prepared for them that love him. We are assured by John, the Beloved, (I. John iii. 2) that it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, also declares (I. Peter i. 3, 4) that the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father are heirs to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading. In the second Epistle to the Corinthians (II. Cor. iv. 17) the apostle seems to fairly stagger in an effort to set before the minds of his brethren the outcome of the afflictions through which in this world they were passing. He says that these afflictions are but light, and that they endure only for a moment, and that they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal burthen of glory. While we look not to the things

which are seen, but to the things which are not seen. Note the effort of the apostle to describe the glory which awaits the children of God who endure to the end. There is a weight of glory, he says; this weight of glory he describes as an exceeding and eternal burthen; and this he describes still further as a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; and beyond this he goes, and affirms that it is a far more exceeding and eternal burthen of glory.

These citations are but samples picked up at random, setting forth the teaching of Christianity concerning the rewards of righteousness here and hereafter. Is it necessary to argue that the tendency of this teaching is to cause men to seek after righteousness in heart and in life?

Let us consider, in the next place, the teaching of Christianity concerning our social relations, and inquire what is the necessary fruit of Christianity as to the social order.

There are those who prate about the subjection of woman; the enslavement of woman as a result of Bible teaching.

Do they not know that in the Bible is contained the first law which, in the history of mankind, placed woman on an equality with man? The Bible in its account of the creation of woman does this. Matthew Henry quaintly says in his comment on Genesis ii. 21, 22, that "the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved."

In a decalogue the father and mother stand in the home upon a plane of equality, for that law declares (Ex. xx. 12) that children ought to "Honor their father and their mother; that their days may be long upon the land which the Lord their God giveth them." If some one should say, "But that is not Christianity that is Judaism," I reply Paul quotes (Eph. ii. 3) this commandment indorsing it, calling attention also to the fact that it "is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth." The command is not simply to

honor the father, but to honor the mother as well. The law requires equal honor to be given in the home to mother and father, to father and mother. Does any one doubt that a family organized according to the teaching of the Bible will be of necessity a happy home? Love in such a home will be regnant.

Continuing this thought let us inquire into the teaching of Christianity as to the duties of husbands toward wives; the duties of wives toward husbands; the duties of parents toward children, and of children toward parents; of masters toward servants, and of servants toward masters.

The Apostle Paul requires husbands (Eph. v. 25-28) to love their wives even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it. He enjoins upon men to love their wives as they love their own bodies. Paul reminds husbands that a man who "loveth his wife loveth himself."

Turning to wives (Eph. v. 22) he exhorts them to "submit yourselves unto your own husbands, and unto the Lord." If you are inclined to think that this exhortation to

submission is a hard saying, and to inquire who can bear it, you are reminded of the characters which husbands in the same connection are required to possess, and the bearing which is to characterize these husbands in their relations to their wives. It will be an easy and a most natural thing for wives to submit themselves to such husbands as Paul describes. Men who love their wives as Christ loved the church; men who love their wives as their own bodies; men who understand that love toward the wife is but another way of loving one's self.

It is a curious and an interesting fact that wives are nowhere exhorted to love their husbands, but husbands are exhorted to love their wives. I wonder why?

Fathers are exhorted in this same epistle (Eph. vi. 4) "Provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Children in this connection (Eph. vi. 1, 2, 3) are exhorted, "Obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayst live long on the earth."

Does any one doubt that in a home where parents live together in love; where fathers provoke not their children to anger, but strive to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; a home where children are obedient to parents—does any one doubt that such a household will be a sort of paradise on earth? But these are the solemn and oft-repeated requirements of Moses and the prophets, of Jesus and the apostles—the oft-repeated requirements of Christianity according to Christ.

Attention has been called to the fact that although slavery existed in the Roman Empire at the time of the introduction of Christianity, not a word was uttered by Jesus, or by any of his elect representatives, against this enormous iniquity, this sum of all willainies. The effort has been made to bring Christianity into disrepute because of this fact. The attempt has been made to say that Christianity encourages human slavery.

On this please note the following: When the Old Testament laws relating to slavery were

promulgated they indicated a step in advance in the direction of a needed humanizing. Previously, and for centuries afterward by other nations than the one elected of God, it was customary to put to death mercilessly those who were captured in war. Mosaism stepped in and stayed effusion of blood, and said in effect to the Hebrew people: "Instead of slaughtering those who are made prisoners by you in the wars which you may wage with neighboring nations, they are to be spared, to be treated as servants, as slaves, but to be treated humanely, to be treated as brothers." The enslavement of Hebrews was but temporary, unless the enslaved should elect deliberately to be a servant for life, which choice was to be signified publicly and with appropriate ceremonies.

Turning to the New Testament the most conspicuous representative of Christ in the history of his religion placed masters under certain injunctions which, if carried out, would result, did result, has resulted in the abolition of slavery wherever Christianity has gone. I have in my mind the following admonition:

(Col. iv. 1) "Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." Is it possible for men to buy and sell; for men to reduce others to slavery and hold them in abject servitude under such a law as this?

On the other hand, the apostle enjoins on servants (Eph. vi. 5) obedience to masters "with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart as unto Christ; not with eye service as men pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." Turning at once from servants, the man of God addresses masters in the following language (Eph. vi. 9), "And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."

You will observe that in this study as to the necessary fruit of Christianity I am calling attention to doctrine and to duty universally

recognized as essential parts of Christianity according to Christ. Concerning these matters there can be no difference of opinion among those who have a regard for facts, and it does seem to me that every reasonable person must, without hesitancy, agree that the fruit of such teaching will be good, only good, and that continually.

If you say that women have not always been treated with due consideration by professed Christians; that husbands have not always borne themselves toward their wives according to the apostolic injunction; that wives have not always borne themselves toward their husbands as the apostle enjoined; that fathers have not been as considerate of their children as the New Testament requires; that children have not always and everywhere in professedly Christian homes been obedient to their parents as unto the Lord; that masters in Christian lands have not always rendered to their servants the things that are just and equal, while servants, professing the name of Christ, have not always served as in the sight of God; I reply that this simply means that

Christianity according to Christ has not been made the rule of life. The faith in Christianity in such cases has not been a practical but a theoretical faith. Wherever the teaching of Christianity is received and made the rule of life, and this is the only satisfactory reception of Christianity, the fruit must be glorious beyond compare.

When men become citizens of the kingdom of God, they do not thereby cease to be citizens of the kingdoms and republics of earth. You are citizens at one and the same time of the Republic of the United States, and of the kingdom of heaven established on earth. Christianity has a word to say to those who receive it as from God, concerning their duties as citizens of earthly governments. In the first place, they are required (I. Tim. ii. 1-3) to make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and to give thanks for all men; "for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet, peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." But before these prayers, supplications, and intercessions can

be made for those in authority, there must be a spirit of loyalty on the part of the citizens toward those who are appointed to rule. In Paul's charge to Titus he tells him (Titus iii. 1, 2) to put the people in mind "to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men."

The Apostle Peter likewise exhorts those whom he characterizes as (I. Peter ii. 9) "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, to (I. Peter ii. 17) honor the king." And this honor, which is to be rendered to the king, follows immediately an admonition to fear God, and this in turn follows an exhortation to love the brethren.

In the Epistle to the Romans the Apostle Paul teaches (Rom. xiii. 1-7) that every soul among the saints is under a solemn obligation to "be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever,

therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinances of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation; for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

And you remember perfectly well the effort that was made by the adversaries of Jesus to arraign him against the civil authorities. You remember the efforts that were made to (Matt. xxii. 15) "entangle him in his talk." The disciples of the Pharisees with the Herodians

asked (verse 17);"“Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?” The reply of the Master was so adroit that the historian tells us his accusers (Matt. xxii. 22) “marveled and left him, and went their way.” His reply to their impudent and wicked question concerning the payment of tribute to Cæsar was (Matt. xxii. 21), “Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.”

The charge that was brought against the Master when he was arraigned before Pontius Pilate was that he claimed to be a king; that therefore he was guilty of treason against Cæsar and his government. To this the Christ replied (John xviii 36), “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” As to the character of the reign which he had come to the earth to establish, Jesus said to Pilate (John xviii. 37), “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” This

was but another way of saying to the representatives of the Roman government, in whose presence he stood: "My dominion is a dominion of truth."

But why pursue this subject further? No one for a moment thinks at the present time in this land that a fruit of Christianity is bad citizenship. The facts stated, the Scriptures recited, show beyond a doubt that Christianity according to Christ will produce the highest and best type of citizenship.

THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE.

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."—II. Timothy iii. 16, 17.

The fact affirmed in this text I believe with all my heart. I will not occupy any portion of your time with an effort to prove that when Paul wrote this proposition he affirmed a great truth. I desire rather to call your attention to the unique character of the Bible. What differentiates this literature, this Book, from all other literature, and from all other books, is the one fact that it is God-inspired. You are invited to accompany me while I place before you the confessions and testimonies of unprejudiced witnesses as to the unique character of the Holy Bible.

Mr. Charles A. Dana, the brilliant editor of

the New York *Sun,* affirmed last autumn in a public address that for the journalist there is no book like the Bible. At that moment he was addressing candidates for the journalistic profession, and spoke of the Holy Scriptures not as strictly religious literature, but as constituting a manual of utility. In a controversy the Bible contains the right answer. It always sets up the right principle. It always pleads for the right policy.

Mr. William T. Stead, editor of *Review of Reviews,* declares that he considers himself successful just as far as he is able to incorporate the Bible in his journal. The newspaper, he says, is a very poor substitute for the Bible even in our attempt to solve the problems of the day.

When Mr. Dana testified to the unique character of the Bible and its peerless value to journalists, he was delivering an exhortation to young men concerning authors to be read. He named in this connection, Channing, Hawthorne, Milton, Matthew Arnold, Thomas Carlyle, and Shakespeare. He considered the Constitution of the United States as a piece of

writing to be studied, but he did not hesitate to place Moses and Isaiah and Paul above the literary celebrities whom he named. The Sermon on the Mount, as a piece of literary work, stands infinitely above the Constitution of the United States. The Bible, as a whole, outranks as literature any volume of literature known in the world. As literature, the Bible is absolutely unique. Its history, its poetry, its prophesy, its parables, its aphorisms, its ethical codes, are unrivaled in the literature of the ages.

Charles Reade affirms that the characters in Scripture are a literary marvel. Run over the list of the Bible characters, and see if this be not true. Consider, if you please, righteous Abel, patient Noah, spiritual Abraham, self-conscious and self-seeking Lot, peaceful Isaac, bargaining Jacob, talented Joseph, meek Moses, eloquent Aaron, persistent Joshua, energetic Caleb, sign-seeking Gideon, playful Samson, undisciplined Saul, friendly Jonathan, pious David, wily Joab, willful Absalom, self-conceited Solomon, lonely Elijah, fretful Jonah, hopeful Isaiah, and faithful Daniel.

Run over the names of some of the chief women of the Bible. In the Old Testament we have Sarah, the mother of the faithful; Rebecca, who may be characterized as the beautiful but deceitful wife; Rachel, the affectionate and devoted wife of Jacob; Miriam, the patriotic old maid; Ruth, the young widow of Moab; Deborah, the strong-minded woman; Jephtha's daughter, the devoted maiden; Hannah, the pious mother of Samuel; Jezebel, the heathen queen of an Israelitish king; Esther, the Israelitish queen of a heathen king, not to mention others.

In the New Testament there are Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist; Mary, the mother of the Christ child; Anna, the last prophetess of the old dispensation; Herodias, the mother of the dancing girl; Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward; the woman of Canaan who, because of her persistent intercession for her daughter, may well be characterized as a heroine of faith; the woman of Samaria, whom the Master met at Jacob's well; the daughter of Jairus, whom Jesus restored to life; Dorcas, the woman full of good works and

alms deeds; Sapphira, the woman who lied, the wife of Ananias; and, without attempting to exhaust the list, Lydia, the enterprising business woman and the first convert to Christianity in Europe.

Jonah is to us a real character. He lives and moves, and has a being on the sacred page to such an extent that we almost feel as if we would recognize him were we to meet him on the street, and yet the presentation of this character is in forty-eight verses or one thousand three hundred and twenty-eight English words. I am not surprised that Mr. Reade should affirm that Jonah is the most beautiful story ever written in so small a compass.

Two women named Mary and Martha ar mentioned by two writers in the New Testament, Luke and John. Luke gives five verses and John fourteen to Mary and Martha, but few as are the words used in describing these women, their characters stand out before us as absolutely perfect—that is to say, as real women of different types. Mr. Reade does not, therefore, exaggerate when he says that the

characters in Scripture are a literary marvel. Compare, if you will, the two Books of Samuel with the writings of Homer and Virgil, with an eye to the characters described by the unknown writer of the Books of Samuel, as compared with the characters described by such high dignitaries in the republic of letters as Homer and Virgil. The characters of the Bible written in the East, live forever in the West. Written in one province, they pervade the world. Penned in rude times, they are prized more and more as civilization advances. Products of antiquity, they come home to the business and bosoms of men, women and children in modern days. This is a marvel. Shakespeare translated into French is not Shakespeare; translated into Chinese, his immortal dramas are simply nothing; but the Bible translated into any language on the globe throbs with life.

The Bible is unique in that it excites thought, investigation, criticism, as no other book in all the world. In our time very much is said about the higher criticism. Have you ever thought of the remarkable fact that the higher

critics spend their time in an examination and discussion of sixty-six little, insignificant pamphlets, the sacred literature of a small, isolated, scattered and persecuted nation, which in numbers is positively insignificant in comparison to the vast multitudes who accept the voluminous sacred books of the Orient. Why is it that such attention is given to this literature, and so little to the mighty mass of Assyrian, Babylonian, Chinese, Hindoo, and Thibetian sacred literature? Why is it that the writings of Moses and Isaiah are scanned so closely while the writings of Confucius and Mohammed are passed by so lightly? Why is it that the teachings of Jesus and Paul are examined again and again microscopically by the learned men of the world, while the teachings of Buddha and Zoroaster excite but little interest, and that languid? Why is it that this sacred literature has been translated by its teachers into all the languages of the earth, and is to-day being desseminated annually to the extent of many millions of copies, while the disciples of Mohammed and Confucius, of Buddha and

Zoroaster, have never thought enough of their sacred literature to translate it and give it to the world? The fact is that to translate the writings we mentioned would be to degrade and destroy. The Bible stands unique, then, in this regard, among the books of the earth.

I remember to have heard Joseph Cook say in the Parliament of Religions, that it is as certain that the Bible came from God as that it leads men to God. That the Bible came from God—is God inspired—is the only rational explanation of its unique character. Is it certain that the Bible leads to God? Matthew Arnold says try all the ways to righteousness you can think of, and you will find that no way brings you to it, except the way of Jesus. Attempt to do without Israel's God, who makes for righteousness, and you will find out your mistake. Attempt to reach righteousness by any way except that of Jesus, and you will also find out your mistake. I quote Matthew Arnold on this point, because he is not famous as an orthodox theologian, as an evangelical Christian. His testimony,

because of his well known character and his superior ability as a literary critic, is all the more valuable.

Does the Bible lead men to God? It is a fact that the study of the Bible and the practice of its precepts make men better in all the walks of life. If its principles could be made the principles of conduct everywhere, what a transformation would take place in the conduct of men toward each other and in the constitution of human society? The ethical teaching of the Bible touches every point of life. It contains instruction for princes and paupers, for rulers and ruled, for masters and servants, for husbands and wives, for parents and children. It requires that in all the walks of life whatever men do they shall do as unto God. It obliterates the distinction between sacred and secular, making all things done in the right spirit, that is as in the sight of God, sacred.

Before leaving this point, permit me to introduce the testimony of Professor Huxley concerning the Bible as an ethical text book. Mr. Huxley said, in an address on the subject

of education: "I have always been strongly in favor of secular education in the sense of education without theology, but I must confess I have been no less seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling which is the essential basis of conduct was to be kept up in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters without the use of the Bible. The pagan moralists lack life and color, and even the noble stoic Marcus Antoninus is too high and refined for an ordinary child. Take the Bible as a whole, make the severest deductions which fair criticism can dictate, and there still remains in this old literature a vast residuum of moral beauty and grandeur. By the study of what other book could children be so humanized?"

Some time since, when engaged in the delivery of a series of sermons on the Bible, a gentleman who signed himself "A Rationalist," sent a card through the mail to my address, containing the following quotations from Felix Adler; "If I were to follow the prevailing fashion, and make a list of the books that

have helped me, I should place the Bible at the head of the list. But the Bible is not a book, it is a literature; that is, it is many books. Parts of it are as dry as the arid desert; as wholesome as a malarial swamp. Other parts are grand and sublime. Those who worship it as perfection are ignorant; those who denounce it are equally ignorant. It is composed of a number of authors, each to be judged on his own merits."

"The Bible is not a book, but a literature." From the birth of Moses to the death of John the Apostle is a period of sixteen centuries. The sixty-six tracts composing the literature which we denominate the Bible, were written by men in almost every conceivable station, and under almost every conceivable environment. They were men of education and men of no learning; men reared in palaces, and men brought up in the midst of the most humble surroundings; men of high station and low; men of wealth and of poverty; men of good character and bad. Literally, all sorts and conditions of men appear upon the pages of this literature, and contribute, in one way

and another, to its production. And yet, with one voice, mankind agree in treating this literature, so long in course of preparation and prepared under such various environments, as a book which they denominate by way of prominence the Bible, that is, the Book. Here is something marvelous. One mind seems to dominate this literature; one subject seems to pervade it from first to last—the revelation of the way of deliverance from the thraldom of sin.

Professor Adler says that "parts of the Bible are as dry as the arid desert, and as wholesome as a malarial swamp." While we must consider this as at least a verbal extravagance, it must be confessed that different parts of the Bible are of different value. The author certainly does not desire to be understood as affirming, in the literal and legitimate use of the words, that there is a moral malaria lurking in any part of these writings. As has been intimated, different parts of the Bible have different uses and may possess different values, but no part of this unique volume is at any time hurtful to any man.

The Old Testament reveals the patriarchal and the Hebrew religions. The prophet Malachi (iv. 4) affirms that the law of Moses, with its statutes and judgments, was intended for all Israel. The preamble to the decalogue teaches the same. If you desire to know what Judaism is, read the Old Testament. If you desire to know what Christianity is, read the New Testament. If you would understand what it is to be a Jew in religious faith and life, consult the pages of the Old Testament. If you desire to know what it is to be a Christian in faith, in spirit, in conduct, ponder the New Testament. In the Old Testament you will learn much as to the nature and consequences of sin, the utter helplessness of man in his fallen estate; the fundamental principles of the Divine government; the nature of God and his gracious purposes concerning man.

Jesus and the apostles encouraged reading the Old Testament. The Master said, Search the Old Testament writings for they are they which testify of me. When Paul said that all Scripture given by inspiration of God is

profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect and thoroughly furnished unto all good works, he referred specifically and primarily to the Old Testament writings. It is a fact that the New Testament can not be understood without the Old. Some one said long ago that the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, while the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.

The New Testament naturally falls into four divisions: the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles, the Apocalypse. The Gospels reveal Christ; the Book of Acts indicates the way of return to God; the Epistles show the application of Christian principles to daily life; the Apocalypse describes in symbolic terms the destiny of those who, by Divine grace, overcome. The Gospels answer the question, Who is Jesus? Acts of Apostles contains the reply to the question, What must I do to be saved? The Epistles answer the inquiry, How does Christianity require me to conduct myself from day to day toward God, toward man? The Book

of Revelation answers the question, What has God provided for those who love him and keep his commandments? Do not fail, I beg of you, to note before we leave the words quoted from Professor Adler the fact that this agnostic Hebrew declares that if he were to follow the prevailing fashion and make a list of the books that have been most helpful to him, he would place the Bible at the top of the column.

That was a brave thing that Joseph Cook did last summer in the Parliament of Religions in the city of Chicago, when in the presence of representatives of Oriental faiths he said, as only the oracle of Tremont Temple could say, quoting Shakespeare:

"Here is Lady Macbeth:

'See how she rubs her hands.
Out, damned spot! Will these hands ne'er be clean?
All the perfumes of Arabia could not sweeten this little hand.'

"And her husband, in a similar mood says:

'This red, right hand, it would
The multitudinous seas incardine,
Making the green, one red.'

"What religion can wash Lady Macbeth's right hand? That is a question I propose to the four continents and all the isles of the sea. Unless you can answer that inquiry, you have not come hither with a sufficiently serious purpose to a Parliament of Religions.

"I take Lady Macbeth on my right arm and her husband on my left, and we three walk down here to the benches of the sceptics of our time who are not represented in this Parliament. Anti-Christian literature in our day is usually half chaff and half chaffing. But I put to infidels the question: 'Can you wash our red, right hand?' All that scepticism or average liberalism says, or ever has said, in answer to this supreme inquiry is as insufficient to meet man's deepest spiritual necessities as a fishing rod would be to bridge this great lake, or the Atlantic.

"I turn to Mohammedanism. Can you wash our red, right hands? I turn to Confucianism and Buddhism and Brahmanism Can you wash our red, right hands? So help me God, I mean to ask a question this afternoon that shall go in some hearts across the seas and to

the antipodes, and I ask it in the name of what I hold to be an absolutely self-evident truth that unless a man is washed from the love of sin and the guilt of sin, he can not be at peace in the presence of infinite holiness."

It must be confessed by all reasonable people that the Bible is absolutely unique in this, that whether it is true or false, whether it is Divine or human in its origin, it speaks oracularly concerning the way of deliverance from sin. It points out specifically the way of pardon and peace. It tells men in terms unmistakably plain how they may become sons of God and heirs to an uncorruptible inheritance. Whence came this unique Book? What must have been the origin of a book which extorts such declarations and confessions as have been quoted in this address from men holding high positions in the republic of letters and in the department of science! Whence came this Book? Is it of God, or is it of man? It must be that it is a supernatural Book. It is supernatural in its contents. Attempt to erase the supernatural from the Bible and what is left?

You will erase, to present but a partial summary, the Mosaic account of the creation; the deliverance of the law on Mount Sinai; the doctrine of human redemption as laid down in both the Old and the New Testaments. You will erase the stories of the translations of Enoch and Elijah; the story of the flood and the deliverance of Noah; the wonders in Egypt and the wilderness of Sinai; the deliverance of Daniel in Babylon from the fury of the lions; the escape of the three Hebrew young men from the burning fiery furnace; the fire from heaven consuming Elijah's sacrifice on Mount Carmel; the handwriting on the wall at Belschazzar's feast; the appearance of angels to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moses, etc.; the story of the burning bush, and the call of the great emancipator and lawgiver; the appearance of the angel to Daniel; the annunciation of the same Gabriel to Mary; the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost; the miraculous conception of the world's Redeemer; the appearance of the angels to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains, announcing the birth of the King of the Jews; the luminous appearance in the sky which

guided the wise men of the East; the sign at the baptism of Jesus; the voice from heaven saying, this is my Son; the scene on the Mount of Transfiguration, in which God declared audibly that men must hear this Son; the protracted fast, and the thrice repeated temptation of the Nazarene; the turning of the water into wine; the giving of sight to the blind; the cleansing of leprous bodies; the raising of dead ones; the descent of the Spirit on Pentecost; the ascension and coronation of the Messiah; the resurrection of the Son of Man; his appearance during forty days after his resurrection and before his ascension; the gift of tongues, and so on and on from Genesis to Revelation.

Eliminating the miraculous from this literature, there is absolutely nothing left. But not only is the Bible a supernatural book in its contents, but it is supernatural in its origin and in its effects. Here is a fact, we look upon it, we walk about it, we examine it, we name it, we call it the Bible. This Bible is the work either of good men or bad men, or of angels or of devils, or of God himself. You can not

think of any other intelligences to whom the authorship of this Book can possibly be referred. It is impossible that good men unaided by the Divine Spirit are the authors of this literature, because in every part of it, in every chapter, in every paragraph, in every line, directly or by implication, they say God is the author of this. If, however, they were doing this work of themselves, without supernatural aid, they lie when they affirm that God is the author. They cease, therefore, to be good men. Bad men can not be the authors of this Book unless a stream can rise higher than its fountain, because, in the first place, from beginning to end this Book condemns evil thoughts, evil purposes, evil plans, evil words, evil deeds. Can you conceive of bad men combining to produce a literature which always and everywhere condemns them at every point. We need not stop, nor have we time to pause to consider the suggestion that possibly this Book originated with disembodied spirits, good or bad, angels or demons. What does any man know about such spirits aside from the revelation contained in the Bible?

The conclusion, therefore, is irresistible that the Bible is of supernatural origin; that it is in this sense a supernatural book—it has God for its author. It is unique in this. There is no other literature among men, nor has there ever been, nor will there ever be, inspired of God in the sense in which this literature is given by inspiration.

Finally, the Bible is unique in that it is a Book of promise. The life of Christ is the story of the beginning of the fulfillment of promises which had cheered the faithful in the darkest hours of Juda's apostacy and ruin. The letters of Paul are the unfolding of that fulfillment in all spiritual experience, ever pointing to a richer and yet richer fulfillment in the ever increasing crescendo movement of the future, and the literature of promise ends with an Apocalyptic vision of perfecting but never perfected fulfillment in the latter days.

The Bible is like a symphony weaving endless variations around one simple theme, which, obscure at first, grows stronger and clearer, until finally the whole orchestra takes it up

in one magnificant choral, conquering all obstacles and breaking through all hidings.

Abraham is beckoned out of the land of idolatry by the finger of promise. Joseph is cheered in danger and in prison by the memory of a dream of promise. Moses is called by promise from his herding in the wilderness to lead a nation of promise out of bondage into a promised land. Joshua is called to his captaincy with reiterated promises. Gideon is inspired for his campaigning by repeated promises. David is sustained in the cave of Adullam, and strengthened in the palace in Jerusalem by promise. From Isaiah to Malachi the note of promise, before broken and fragmentary, sounds without a pause. The shepherds are brought to the Christ by an angelic message of promise. He begins his ministry by a sermon at Nazareth, which is a promise of glad tidings to the poor, and ends it in his ascension with a promise of his return. Paul lives on promise as on manna heaven descended, declaring, in the midst of great tribulations, 'We are saved by hope; for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for?'

and John closes the canon with a book whose glory is like the glory of a setting sun, which promises a clear to-morrow."

AN HONEST DOUBTER.

"Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"—Luke vii. 19.

The person propounding these questions was none other than John the Baptist. The person to whom the questions were propounded was Jesus. John was in prison. He communicated with Jesus, his kinsman according to the flesh, through two of his disciples. He seems to have been in doubt as to whether, after all, Jesus was the person predicted by Moses and the prophets. To settle this doubt was the purpose of this message by this committee of two.

The connection shows that the doubts to be settled were John's and not those of his disciples, because, after the messengers had left Jesus with his reply addressed to John, the Master began to talk to the people concerning the Baptist. His words leave no doubt that John had done, or was doing that which

would produce in the minds of the people an unfavorable impression concerning the strength and stability of his character. Jesus said, therefore, When you went into the wilderness, did you go for the purpose of seeing a frail reed trembling in the breeze? Did you leave your homes, and go into the wilderness to look upon a man clothed in soft attire, a man delicate as if accustomed to kings' courts? You did not go to see an effeminate man, a gorgeously appareled person, one who bore evidence of high living, but you went to see a grand, strong, rugged, solid man. If you suppose from the inquiries which I have received from John that he is frail, effeminate, weak, hesitating, vacillating, you entirely misjudge him. When you went out into the wilderness to see and hear the great preacher, you went that you might give attention not only to a prophet, to one who speaks instead of or in behalf of God, but you went to see one who was much more than a prophet. This one, whose preaching drew you into that lonely place, was a messenger predicted by Malachi, who should precede Messiah, preparing the way before him.

I tell you, said Jesus in this connection, That among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist.

What the Christ said at this time about the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth can only be understood on the supposition that John himself was in doubt as to the Messianic claims of Jesus, and he wished a communication from the possible Messiah of a character to displace these doubts by a strong faith.

But John had borne very explicit testimony to the Divine nature and mission of Jesus. He had spoken of him as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. He declared that he himself had been sent to preach and baptize for the express purpose of introducing Messiah to Israel. He had said that he saw the Spirit at the baptism of Jesus descending from heaven like a dove and resting upon him. By this he knew that Jesus was the Son of God, and so he testified to this truth. He even spoke to his disciples in such a way concerning Jesus as to lead them to turn from himself and follow after the person whom John and they supposed to be

the Son of God. How was it possible for this man who had seen the heavens opened, and the Spirit, in the form of a dove, descending and resting upon Jesus; who had heard a voice from the excellent glory declaring, This is my Son in whom I am well pleased—how was it possible for this man, having passed through these experiences and having borne such clear and emphatic testimony to Jesus, to fall into doubt? How could he be brought into a state of mind in which he would inquire of Jesus, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

To understand this it is necessary to consider the work of John the Baptist, and the kind of man physically, mentally and morally that he must have been to do such a work.

We speak of our distinguished evangelists who, in great centers of population, in theatres, halls, and churches, and tabernacles, address evening after evening great throngs of people—we speak of these preachers as great men, men of extraordinary power. But what shall we say of John whose preaching was not in a densely populated district, but in the

wilderness; who delivered no discourses in well-appointed auditoriums; but preached in the open air, and whose proclamation was of such a character that Jerusalem and Judea and all the region round about Jordan went into the wilderness to see and hear him. What a power as a preacher this man must have possessed! Nor did they come merely to gratify an idle curiosity, but if this, in the first place, was a reason for their going, his preaching was of such power that they were led to confess their sins, and receive baptism at his hands, in token of their determination to live better lives.

Now, a man who could do this kind of a work was not a pale, thin, nervous, delicate, poetic, esthetic sort of individual. He must have been physically solid, rugged, energetic, strong. We know that his habits of life were of the plainest. His raiment, we are told, was of camel's hair, a leathern girdle was about his loins, while his meat was locusts and wild honey. As I try to picture to my mind the personal appearance of John, the wilderness preacher, I think incidently of

men like Spurgeon and Moody; rugged, honest, plain, blunt, strong men. But there must have been in John's mental and moral make-up, clearness of vision, largeness of hope, tenderness of sympathy, to move people in the fashion in which they were moved, and to the extent to which the entire community was stirred.

There was something about this man to take hold upon the people with a mighty grasp. This preacher was intensely human. This preacher was a hopeful man. This preacher was tenderly sympathetic. He must have been, in order to produce results such as are attributed to him in our ancient sacred literature.

The preaching of John the Baptist was intensely personal. He said to Herod that he was a sinner in that he was living with Herodias, his brother's wife, in the marital relation. John said to him, It is not lawful for you to live in this way with this woman. Herodias was furious. Herod, to gratify his wife, would have put the great preacher to death, but he feared the multitude. The masses

of the people believed that John was a prophet of the Most High.

The preacher, therefore, instead of being executed without delay, was imprisoned. When he sent the two messengers to Jesus he sent them from his prison cell. Word had come to John concerning the words of and the deeds of the Master. The disciples of John reported to their master what Jesus was saying and doing.

You are now to consider the probable limitations of John's understanding of the mission of the Master. Jesus' own disciples, men who were near to him, who had access to his person every day and every hour in the day, who could propound questions and listen to the answers, who could receive from his immaculate lips saying after saying, and precept after precept, with illustration upon illustration, failed to grasp the meaning of his message and ministry. When he spoke to them about a kingdom, they understood him to mean a temporal kingdom. Hence the wife of Zebedee, the mother of James and John, approached him with a request that he would give the

young men honored positions in his government, inviting them to sit the one upon his right hand and the other upon his left when he would appear in his kingdom. Mother Zebedee desired that one of her sons should be made Secretary of State, and that another should be made Secretary of the Treasury, or something of that kind. The meaning of her application and of theirs was, Make these, my sons, make us, members of your cabinet when you shall organize your government. Evidently, they had in view a government similar to the worldly empires and monarchies, and states and republics, of which they had heard and read, and with which they were acquainted. That Jesus came to establish a spiritual dominion seems not to have entered their minds. Even after his death, burial, and triumphal resurrection; after the forty days that he had spent with them subsequent to his victory over death and hell and the grave; as they were on their way to the Mount of Ascension, his disciples said, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel? They were still thinking of a

temporal government. They were still thinking of and expecting the time to come when, under the leadership of Jesus, the Roman yoke would be broken, the Roman authority would be thrown aside; when he would call about him a cabinet, organize a government, cause an army to come into existence, and begin to rule after the fashion of Saul, and David, and Solomon.

Now, have we reason to think that John the Baptist understood the end of our Lord's mission more clearly, more accurately, than this mission was understood by his immediate personal friends and devoted followers? It is true that John, at the baptism of Jesus, and for a few days thereafter, had a pretty clear view, apparently, of these matters, but his understanding was not so thorough as to become a part of his being. It was an understanding that was, comparatively speaking, shallow, unsubstantial. Men come to an understanding of truth little by little. This is your experience and mine. It is the experience of all men. Approaching truth is much like approaching the land from the ocean. Standing

on the deck and looking out for land, one thinks he has descried a point, and calls to his friend and says, Is there not land in the distance? But now he can not see it, his friend can not see it, and together they conclude that there must be some mistake, that he did not see land as he supposed. The fact is, standing on the forward part of the deck, with the ship on the crest of a great wave, he did see land, but when he and his friend looked in that direction, the ship had plunged into a trough of the sea, and the land was not visible. So in life's voyage we are lifted up and cast down; we move forward, and we fall back. We catch glimpses of truth, and then the truth which passed hastily before our vision disappears, to re-appear by and by as slowly and laboriously we move forward. At last we see it, grasp it, take it in so thoroughly that it becomes a part of our nature, and we almost wonder that there was ever a time in our experience when we did not understand this matter just as we understand it now.

So I would interpret John in his ringing

testimony to the Christ, and in the doubts which seem to have troubled him when he was a prisoner awaiting the hour of his death.

Then you must consider that a man of the temperament which we have attributed to this great preacher is a man who, when his loved activities are interfered with, naturally falls into despondency and doubt. An emotional man he must have been, but men of emotional temperament, while they mount up to a very great height, are cast down to a very great depth. If John could have gone on preaching repentance and the approaching reign of heaven, he probably would not have fallen into the state of mind in which he was when he inquired, "Art thou he which should come?" But his work being suddenly and permanently interrupted, one of the most natural things was that he should fall into the state of mind which is in this discourse attributed to him.

There are other illustrations of experience not unlike this in the Bible and in the history of the church.

Elijah, the Tishbite, furnishes an illustration of the thought which is now in my mind.

You remember the story of the scene on Mount Carmel between Elijah, the prophets of Baal, and the prophets of the groves, eight hundred and fifty in number. Elijah was charged with troubling Israel. He indignantly denied the accusation. He said to Ahab, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and have followed Baalam." It was agreed that a test should be made as to whether Baal or Jehovah was the true God. Elijah said, "Give us two bullocks. Let Baal's prophets choose one of these bullocks, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under. I will take the other bullock, dress it, lay it on wood, put no fire under. You will call on the names of your gods; I will call on the name of the Lord. Let it be understood that the god who answers by fire, he will be regarded as the true god." To this proposition the people agreed. Elijah addressed the prophets of Baal. He said, "Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it; for ye are many; call on the name of your gods. Be careful that you conceal no fire in

the altar." It was done. From morning until noon the prophets of this false god shouted, "O Baal, hear us! O Baal, hear us!" But there was no response. Elijah mocked them. He said, "Baal is a god, but he is talking, or he is on a journey, or he has become weary and has fallen asleep. Cry aloud; you must wake him." Poor ignorant silly souls! They did not understand that Elijah was dealing in sarcasm. They, therefore, cried aloud. They cut themselves with knives and lancets until the blood gushed out upon them. Finally, they gave up in despair.

Then Elijah said to the people, "Come near unto me." He repaired the altar of the Lord which had been broken down. He built in the name of the Lord an altar and digged a trench about it. He placed wood on the altar. He slew his bullock, divided it into pieces, and placed the pieces on the wood. He commanded that four barrels of water should be poured over the whole. "Do this a second time," he said. They did it. "Do it a third time," and the third time they did it. This was done that there might be no suspicion of concealed

fire in, on, under or about the altar. Having made the necessary preparation Elijah called on the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and said, "Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant. Hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." And while he prayed the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. The people seeing this response to Elijah's appeal, fell on their faces and declared, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." Elijah commanded that the priests of Baal should be slain, that not one of them should escape.

Now, if you suppose that the prophet passed through this experience without excitement, without his nervous system having been brought up to the highest tension, you are mistaken. It was most natural that there should come a reaction, and that this courageous conduct on his part, and this mighty victory, should be followed by a season of great despondency

and a terrible defeat, and so it was. When Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and that he had slain the prophets of Baal with the sword, she became enraged, and sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time." When he received that message he ran, he made good time, he ran a whole day off into the wilderness, and the next we see of this grand, rugged, strong, brave, courageous man, he is under a juniper tree, wishing that he might die. He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

Another illustration presents itself in the history of Moses. After he had, with a persistent courage almost incredible, led his people out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and while they were encamped on the peninsula of Sinai, at the base of the

mountain, they forgot him, and his and their God. Within forty days they had so far forgotten all that he had done for them, and all that Jehovah had wrought in their behalf, that they made a calf of gold and proceeded to worship it.

Moses' anger waxed high. He seemed to become utterly discouraged. He appeared to feel: My effort is in vain. I have left a palace, turned from a throne, spurned a scepter, cast aside a crown, given up my heirship to the mightiest monarchy on earth that I might lead a nation of slaves into liberty, and they care not for me, nor for my God, nor for the liberty into which I would bring them. Casting himself before God, he says: "Oh! this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." This is the cry of an utterly disheartened man. His faith and courage seem for the time to have deserted him. The response of the Lord to Moses was, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book."

David had these seasons of discouragement, despondency, doubt, unbelief. Read the Hebrew hymn book, and note the evidence furnished therein of the absolute correctness of this statement.

Jeremiah furnishes another illustration of the same character of experience on the part of a large, grand, good man. He saw the evils coming to his people. He saw the impending ruin to his government. He protested against the wrong; he pleaded for the right; he counseled wisely. He entreated and besought with tears, but the people rushed on madly. Jeremiah saw so clearly the ruin that was impending that his name has come to be a synonym for sadness, and sorrow, and tears, and bitter grief.

Paul was not always full of faith and courage, we may well believe. When he was in the city of Corinth, for instance, the Lord spoke to him in the night by a vision saying: "Be not afraid to speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee." More than once in the experience of this great man are there

indications that he wavered, tottered, staggered, almost fell. What an exclamation of bitter agony drops from the tip of his pen as in the Epistle to the Romans he cries: "Oh! wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from this dead body?" This exclamation, which sounds up from the depths of despair, follows immediately after the record of his experience: "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." When he was in prison in Rome, writing the Epistle to the Saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi with the bishops and deacons, he seems to have been disheartened, discouraged, because he says, "I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." As I read this, Paul says: "I am tired, I am weary, I have had enough of this conflict, I want to get out of it and find rest. Notwithstanding," says this moral hero, "for me to remain in the flesh is needful to you."

Instances are abundant in the history of the church that grand men in all days, centers and generations, have been subjects of an unhappy experience similar to that through which John

the Baptist was passing when the message which constitutes the text of this sermon was sent. Charles Wesley wrote the hymn beginning with the words: "Jesus, lover of my soul," in 1740, during the first stormy scenes of his itinerant preaching. Whether the figures in its stanzas were suggested by the storms of the Atlantic which the writer had but recently encountered, or by the storms of human passion, we can not say, but there are evidences in the hymn that the writer was crying in his helplessness to the Unseen Power for shelter from some pitiless storm. In Charles Wesley's journey on the Atlantic he thus describes his spiritual conflicts and triumphs during a storm: "I prayed for power to pray; for faith in Jesus Christ; continually repeating his name till I felt the virtue of it at last, and knew I abode under the shadow of the Almighty. The storm was at its height. At 4 o'clock the ship made so much water that the captain, finding it impossible to save her from sinking, cut down the mizzen-mast. In this dreadful moment I blessed God. I found comfort and hope, and such joy in finding I could hope as the world can neither

give nor take away. I think that conviction of the power of God present with me, overruling fear and raising me above what I am by nature, has surpassed all rational evidence."

The familiar hymn of Ray Palmer, "My faith looks up to Thee," was written about the year 1830. He was a student at the time, preparing for the ministry, and his health was very poor and his worldly prospects clouded. He felt that the world could promise him nothing, and in an hour of despondency the young student turned as his only help and resource to the promises of God. Comforted in spirit by Him to whom all things are possible, he tells his experience, and expresses his hope for the future, in the grand old hymn which we sing in our churches.

Cowper's hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way," was written when he had just recovered from a prolonged attack of melancholy in which his sufferings had been so extreme that he attempted to take his own life. The storm that had fallen upon him had broken his friendships, and divorced his heart from the pleasures of the world. He could say after

this season of depression and wonderful deliverance as he could not have said before:

"You fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

We all sing on funeral occasions:

"I would not live always; I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way;
The few cloudy mornings that dawn on us here
Are enough for life's woes, full enough for its cheer.

"I would not live always; no; welcome the tomb;
Since Jesus has lain there, I dread not its gloom;
There sweet be my rest, till he bid me arise
To hail him in triumph descending the skies."

Who wrote these words? The founder of the Church of the Holy Communion on Sixth Avenue and Twenty-sixth Street in the city of New York. Who wrote these lines? The man who not only founded that church, but secured for it an endowment that it may stand in lower New York for generations as a beacon. Who is the author of this hymn? The

man who founded and endowed St. Luke's Hospital. Who uttered these words of gloom and sadness? William Augustus Muhlenberg, one of the grandest and most saintly men who has ever lived and wrought in the great city of New York. Under what circumstances? When a great grief came to him in early manhood. When the one with whom he expected to make life's pilgrimage had suddenly been snatched away. In that season of despondency this historic hymn was written.

The experience, therefore, of John the Baptist was not such an unknown experience that it should be set aside. Other grand men have passed through scenes of discouragement and doubt similar to that of the world's Redeemer.

But I call your attention to the conduct of John at this time. He commanded his disciples to go directly to the Master with the inquiry which was uppermost in his mind: "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" He did not say, as do many of our modern doubters, "I believe in looking all about a subject, examining it thoroughly, surveying it on every side and from every possible point

of view," and then spend their time listening to addresses, and reading books the tendency of which is to encourage doubt, steadily, persistently abstaining from hearing discourses or reading volumes the purpose and tendency of which is to generate and encourage faith. John did what you ought to do if you are troubled with doubts—go to the fountain of faith; inquire of the great Teacher concerning the matter.

Look at the answer returned by Jesus. He said to the committee: "Tell John what you have seen and heard. Tell him that the blind see, that the lame walk, that lepers are cleansed, that the deaf hear, that the dead are raised, and to the poor the Gospel is preached." In other words: "Tell your master what I am doing, from which he may determine whether I am the person predicted or whether he ought to look for another."

A line of argument is here suggested for our holy religion that we may consider impregnable. If men will look at what the Christ has done and is doing by his gospel and by his church, the conclusion will be well-nigh

inevitable that he was and is the Messiah, the anointed of the Father, the Son of the living God. Christianity according to Christ is now giving sight to the blind, feet to the lame, cleansing to the leprous, hearing to the deaf, and more wonderufl than a physical resurrection is the lifting of men out of death in trespasses and sins into lives of faith, and hope, and love, and holiness.

In conclusion, if for any reason your faith is wavering, go with your doubts to Jesus. If because of failing health, or loss of property, or infidelity of friends, or the decease of loved ones, you are in the valley of despondency, there is no encouragement like that which can be derived from an intelligent examination of the words of Jesus and his inspired ambassadors. I commend you, therefore, sorrowing, discouraged, doubting, timid souls—I commend you, therefore, to the Lord Jesus and to the Word of his Grace as the remedy for these things. He will build you up, and make you strong in faith and hope, and give you at last an inheritance among the sanctified.

THE PROBLEM OF UNION.

"That they may all be one."—John xvii. 21.

These words are a part of the Lord's prayer. They are not a part of what is usually so denominated, a prayer recorded by Matthew and Luke, but in reality the prayer which has been preserved in the memorabilia of John may, more fittingly than the former, be designated as the Lord's.

The prayer, of which the words just quoted are a part, divides itself into three sections. In the first our Lord prays for himself. He says: "Glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee." "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." This part of the prayer has certainly been answered. When Jesus was received up into heaven after his work on earth, he was glorified with the Father with a glory equal, if not superior, to the glory which

he had before the beginning of the ages. In the second division of this wonderful prayer, our Lord requests the Father in behalf of his personal friends. He says: "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me." And: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them from the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one." He also says: "Holy Father keep them in thy name which thou hast given me that they may be one even as we are." This part of the prayer was also answered. The personal friends of the Christ were kept "from the evil one" according to his request. They were also "one even as we are," that is, as the Father and the Son are one.

The Book of Acts of Apostles is a brief history of the Church of Christ in the apostolic age. In it we read the fulfillment of our Saviour's prayer so far as it relates to his personal friends and their first converts. We are told that after the ascension of Jesus his disciples returned to Jerusalem, and entering an upper chamber, they were "all with one accord" engaged in prayer until the day of

Pentecost was come. This was a union and a protracted prayer-meeting. Note the fact that out of this prayer-meeting came the Church of Christ.

Converts to Jesus were at once gained. So great was the success of the preaching of the Word, the historian assures us, that at the close of the great Pentecost, there had been "added unto them in that day about three thousand souls." Nor did success cease with that meeting, for "the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved." The historian informs us that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul." Here, then, we have a Divinely authorized record of the answer to the second part of the Lord's prayer, that part which related to his personal friends and disciples, and their first converts, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel according to John.

The third division of this prayer relates to all believers. Jesus said: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word that they may all be one even as thou, Father, art in me and I

in thee, that they also may be in us that the world may believe that thou didst send me."

This part of the prayer is unanswered to-day. There are very few, if any, who will claim that the disciples of Christ are "one, even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee." There is not such a union and unity existing between the children of God as exists between the Father and the Son.

We have seen how, in the beginning, "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul." Turning over the pages of the New Testament in our study of the Apostolic Church, we see that differences of opinion, of feeling, of speech and conduct, developed at an early period among those who wore the name of the Christ.

When Jesus was leaving the earth, he commissioned twelve persons to "make disciples of all the nations"—to "go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation." These persons were clothed with plenary power. Jesus constituted them his ambassadors. They claimed that they were ambassadors "on behalf of Christ as though God were entreating

by us." "On behalf of Christ" they besought men to be "reconciled to God." Jesus assured these persons that the Spirit which he would send, after his coronation in the heavens, would guide them "into all the truth." He said also to them: "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me, and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me." To hear these persons, therefore, is to hear the Christ. All that Jesus said and did during his personal ministry was but the beginning of his teaching and work. We read, therefore, as the introductory words of Acts of Apostles, "The former treatise I made, O Theophilus! concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which he was received up after that he had given commandment through the Holy Ghost unto the Apostles whom he had chosen."

As we discover the differences growing into discords, and finally schisms among the early disciples, it will be profitable to notice the attitude of these holy men, representatives of Jesus, endued in a remarkable degree with the Spirit of the living God, guided by this Spirit

"into all truth"—it will be interesting to note the bearing of these men toward this alienation, discord and growing schism among the disciples of our Lord. Were they pleased with it? Did they commend it? Did it seem to them in harmony with the Gospel of the Prince of Peace? Did they pass it by in silence? What was their attitude toward this change which they saw coming over their brethren? A change which disturbed the peace, harmony and unity of the church. Let us consult Paul on this matter.

The Apostle to the Gentiles said "unto the church of God which is at Corinth" that "it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them which are of the household of Chloe, that there are divisions among you." Having heard this he writes to these brethren very tenderly. Five years before he had spent a year and six months in the city of Corinth preaching the word of God and winning men to Christ. The historian tells us that "many of the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized." Very tenderly were these persons loved by their Father in

the Gospel. He says to them: "Though ye should have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I begat ye through the Gospel." He says also: "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy for I espoused you to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ, but I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ." Having been informed of the "contentions" which existed among those "that are sanctified in Christ Jesus called to be saints," he says to his children, whom he had begotten in the Gospel, "I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfected together in the same mind, and in the same judgment."

Impossible! We can not "all speak the same thing." We can not "be perfected together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." Paul, then, was a dreamer, was he? He was not a practical man? Are you prepared to take

this position? But how is it possible for us to "all speak the same thing?" If we agree to speak of Bible things in Bible language, it will be utterly impossible for us to do anything else in the way of utterance than to "speak the same thing." If we are now not speaking "the same thing" it is either because we are all failing to speak as "the oracles of God speak," or because some of us speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where the Bible is silent, while others employ their own language rather than that of the Holy Spirit. If the rule here suggested should be adopted the result would be not only a unity of speech, but a unity of thought as well. For it would be impossible to "all speak the same thing," and not "be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." In words, all who wear the name of Christ, certainly in Protestant Christendom, agree that "the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament" contain "all things necessary to salvation," and are "the rule and ultimate standard of faith." To this all Protestants hold as a theory, but is the theory reduced to practice? If there

are divisions among us it is because we are out of harmony with this fundamental Protestant position.

The character of "contentions" among the "sanctified in Christ Jesus" in the city of Corinth is described by the apostle in the words following: "Each one of you saith I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, I of Cephas, and I of Christ." In other words, it seems that those who were "called to be saints" were rallying around these men as party leaders. They were becoming Paulites, and Apollosites, and Cephasites, and Christites. If ever such conduct was excusable, it was in that early period of the church's history. First, because the persons who were indulging had but recently turned to the Lord, and were not well instructed in the principles of the Gospel; and, second, the men whom they elected to be their leaders were mighty men. Who can doubt that the Paul who condemned the conduct of those who, in that day, professed to "call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," would condemn with equal, if possible greater, emphasis those who in our day say, "I am of

Luther, and I of Calvin, and I of Wesley, and I of Campbell." Such a spirit and speech and course of life in the Apostolic age was wrong, was rebuked by the Apostle, is wrong now, and the Scriptures in which his rebuke of that ancient wrong is recorded stand as a rebuke to us who are guilty of these things, upon whom the ends of the world have come.

The rebuke which Paul administered is first in the language following: "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or, were ye baptized into the name of Paul? Were he in our midst he would probably say, "Is Christ divided? Was Luther crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Campbell?"

Further along in this first epistle unto "the church of God which is at Corinth," the Apostle tells these "sanctified" that their "contentions" are evidences of carnality. While they think and feel and speak and act in the manner in which they are thinking, feeling, speaking and acting they are under the dominion of the flesh rather than that of the Spirit. Paul says: "I hear that divisions exist among you, and I partly believe it." He says again:

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it; nay not even now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal, for, whereas, there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk after the manner of men? For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not men? What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him. I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So, then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." In other words, Paul in rebuking the "jealousy and strife" among those "called to be saints," says in effect, I am nothing, Apollos is nothing, that we should excite your admiration. We are only instruments in the hands of God in generating belief in your hearts. You ought, then, to be ashamed of yourselves on account of your "contentions, jealousy and strife." Paul and Apollos were simply "God's fellow-workers," and the

"sanctified in Christ Jesus" at Corinth were "God's husbandry, God's building,"

The Apostle would seem to attempt to elevate these brethren to such a plane that they would be ashamed to indulge in "strife, jealousy, wraths, factions, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults." He reminds them of their enormous wealth, and of the relation which they sustain to the Divine Christ, saying: "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world of life or death, or things present or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." This inventory of the Christian's wealth Paul would employ for the purpose of exciting shame on the part of the schismatics in Corinth; for the purpose of bringing them from under the dominion of the flesh; for the purpose of bringing them into subjection to the Divine Spirit.

Did time permit, it would be easy to occupy the minutes allotted to this discourse in quoting and commenting on the words of condemnation uttered by these ambassadors of Christ against "jealousy, contention, debate, strife, confusion, schism," among those who

have been "translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son."

There is space for but a single additional reference. The Epistle to the Ephesians is apparently a circular letter on the subject of union among believers of the Jewish and Gentile nations. It was exceedingly difficult to harmonize these diverse elements in the early church, but Paul reminds "the saints which are at "Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus" that they were at one time "separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the twain one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both"—that is both Jews and Gentiles—"in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;

and he came and preached peace to you that were far off"—that is, to the Gentiles—"and peace to them that were nigh:"—that is, the Jews—"for through him we both"—Jews and Gentiles—"have our access in one Spirit unto the Father. So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together"—not separately, but together—"for a habitation of God in the Spirit."

The heart of this epistle is an appeal for unity, and is found in the fourth chapter where the Apostle says: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope

of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." In other words, the Apostle seems to say "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus;" Possessing so many things in common, you, Jews and Gentiles, ought "to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye are called." Do you not see, he seems to say, that you are members of one body? That you have been begotten and are now guided by one Spirit? That you are sustained by one hope? That you are submissive to one Lord? That you hold to the one faith? That you have been baptized with one baptism, and that there is one God who is the Father of all, over all, through all, and in all? You ought, therefore, as a result, to walk "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love." You ought, seeing that you are members of one body, animated by one spirit, sustained by one hope, submissive to one Lord, hold to one faith, have been baptized with one baptism, and have one Father who is the one God, over all, through all, and in all—you ought to give "diligence

to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

The time was, and not so long ago, when it was necessary to show from the Scriptures that divisions among the people of God are condemned by Jesus and the apostles, and that unity and peace ought to be, in a much larger degree than at present exists, characteristics of those who belong to the school of Christ. A necessity for this at the present time is not upon us. For this we may well give thanks to Almighty God. Our brethren see that the divisions which exist among us are not warranted by the teaching of the New Testament. It is universally conceded that the condition of the church, at the present time, is anomalous and indefensible. There is a very widespread interest in the problem of union, and in this we may well rejoice. As never before are men studying the sacred writings to discover the mind of Christ upon this matter. As at no period in the past men are thinking, praying, conferring. The question is now, How can believers become one as the Father and the Son are one? And thus impress, as

we are not now impressing, the world with the thought that Jesus is the Son of God and the Saviour of lost men. The question now before us relates to the basis on which this union can be brought about. Something ought also to be said as to the nature of the desired union. In this place, however, and at this time, I can not speak on that topic. Let us consider the present state of the question as it relates to the problem of unity. There are five principal schemes at present before the public. These may be characterized by five words as follows: "Submission," "Confederation," "Consolidation," "Compromise," "Restoration." A word now concerning each.

1. Submission. The Church of Rome says, in effect, "The church is divided. For this division, Protestants are responsible. You departed," says His Holiness, "from the Mother Church. You now seem to lament the fact that there is 'strifes, jealousy, wraths, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults.' It is well that you see, appreciate, lament these evils and desire deliverance therefrom. The way of deliverance from these things, which

so curse the church, is simple. You Protestants went away from the Holy Mother Church. If you will return and be submissive to His Holiness, Christ's Vice-regent among men, all will be well." This, in effect, Rome presents as the solution of the problem of the re-union of Christendom. It is unnecessary in this presence to more than state the position.

2. Confederation. Our Presbyterian brethren favor this as preferable to any other method that has been suggested. The venerable ex-President of Princeton, James McCosh, a few years ago advocated with considerable zeal, and no little ability, a confederation of denominations as the remedy for the evils which we all see and acknowledge. This scheme contemplates denominationalism as a permanent feature of our church life. There is a broad field in the cultivation of which all denominations may and ought to act together. Some sort of organization ought to be effected bringing these denominations into harmony in the cultivation of this field. It is a little difficult to state definitely what is meant by confederation. In fact, the plan can not be presented

in any other than the most general terms. The thought suggested by the word "confederation" is doubtless, from what is here said, obvious to your mind. This plan is a step in the right direction. It is important that, just so far as possible, Christian people, in the matters in which there is among them agreement, should work together. By this method they will come to understand each other more fully, and I am so optimistic as to think that they will, as a result, appreciate each other more highly, and that this appreciation will gradually ripen into affection, and this affection will result by and by in a permanent union. That a confederation of the churches is thought of and advocated as a way to re-unite the divided members of the Church of Christ is one of the hopeful signs of the times. As a step in the right direction, I am in hearty sympathy with it. That it is the solution of the problem I do not believe. It is clear to my mind that when our Saviour prayed, "that they may all be one," he meant something more than a confederation of denominations. That he meant much more than this is evident from the fact

that he immediately added, "even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us."

3. Consolidation. Our brethren of the Protestant Episcopal Church manifest and have for some time exhibited a good degree of interest in the problem of union. The House of Bishops at a meeting held in Chicago in 1886 submitted the following four articles which were afterwards amended by the Lambeth Conference in London:

First, The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as containing all things necessary to salvation, and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.

Second, The Apostles' Creed as the baptismal symbol; and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

Third, The two sacraments ordained by Christ himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by him.

Fourth, The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the

varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his church.

This plan hinges on something called "The Historic Episcopate." Just what this is I have not been able to discover. Nor have I been indifferent as to its meaning. In the "Church Review," for April and October, 1890, there appeared a series of papers in which "the Lambeth propositions of 1888" were discussed by a number of churchmen. These papers were printed in a volume entitled "Church Reunion Discussed on the Basis of the Lambeth Propositions of 1888." The book contains between four and five hundred pages. To discover what is meant by "The Historic Episcopate," I have read carefully every word in this volume. I am forced to the conclusion that there is no unity of understanding of this matter on the part of our brethren of the Protestant Episcopal Church. With a desire, also, to understand these brethren, and do them justice in a discussion of their scheme, I have read Dr. Huntington's book in which he discusses "The Historic Episcopate," and also "An Essay on the Four Articles of Church

Unity Proposed by the American House of Bishops and the Lambeth Conference," by Charles Woodruff Shields, D. D., LL. D., of Princeton; not to mention other writings. I am, however, compelled to confess that I have not received the illumination which I very earnestly desire. It is apparent to my mind that the proposition of the House of Bishops and the Lambeth conference contemplates the re-ordination by the Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the ministers of all the Protesatnt denominations as an essential condition precedent to the reunion of the Church of Christ. This means that there shall be a consolidation of Baptists, Disciples, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, and all others, under the Episcopate as it exists at the present time in the Protestant Episcopal Church. For this reason I characterize this scheme of union by the name "Consolidation." There is no serious controversy concerning the first three points submitted. It is safe to say that if reunion is deferred until Protestant Christendom shall be consolidated under the Episcopate as it now

exists in the Protestant Episcopal Church, no one who listens to these words or reads these lines will ever see a united Church.

4. Compromise. At the antipodes of Episcopacy is Congregationalism. Episcopalianism and Congregationalism represent the extremes in church order and organization. The Congregational State Association of New Jersey, which includes also Eastern Pennsylvania, Maryland and the District of Columbia, in the month of April, 1894, proposed to the various Protestant Churches of the United States an alliance based on—

First, The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, inspired by the Holy Spirit, as containing all things necessary to salvation, and as being the rule and ultimate standard of Christian faith.

Second, Discipleship of Jesus Christ, the Divine Saviour and Teacher of the world.

Third, The Church of Christ ordained by him to preach his Gospel to the world.

Fourth, Liberty of conscience in the interpretation of the Scriptures and in the administration of the Church.

The point in this scheme which is of, to say the least, doubtful propriety, is the fourth, in which "Liberty of conscience in the interpretation of the Scriptures and in the administration of the Church," is proposed. This means, among other things, that in the administration of baptism there shall be perfect freedom to do this or that or the other thing or nothing at all. This phrase, "Liberty of conscience in the interpretation of the Scriptures" can easily be interpreted to mean that every text of Scripture in which the initiatory rite of the Christian Church is mentioned may with a free hand be erased. Am I warranted in this statement? A discussion of the proposal of our Congregationalist brethren in their periodicals is a sufficient warrant for this apparently sweeping statement. Not only is infant baptism to be recognized as of equal validity with the baptism of believers, but affusion is to be recognized as baptism equally valid with immersion. If a Quaker applies for membership quoting Colossians second chapter: "Why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances? Handle

not, nor taste, nor touch (all which things are to perish with the using), after the precepts and doctrines of men? Which things have, indeed, a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh"—if, I say, a Quaker applies for membership quoting this passage, and saying that loyalty to the Christ will not permit him to submit to baptism, in or with water, or to approach the Lord's Supper, repudiating the two ordinances of Christ's appointment, he is to be received into the fellowship of the Church. It does seem to me that this is hardly consistent with personal loyalty to the Christ. My conscience, if this is to be the rule, is not at "liberty."

At this point I am reminded of an article in the April number of "The New Christian Quarterly," from the pen of our brother Thomas Munnell, entitled "A Compromise Christian Union." This article was certainly written before the proposition of the Congregational State Association of New Jersey. The writer discusses his subject in the following way: "Would it be right? Would it succeed? Should

we favor it? Under the head of "Would it be right?" Brother Munnell asks, referring to certain "deficiencies" in the primitive churches in contrast with certain acknowledged deficiencies in the church of to-day: "Were the former more pardonable than the latter? Is infant baptism less pardonable than infant circumcision in the primitive church? Is rantism for baptism less pardonable than the offering of bull's blood after Jesus had died once for all? Is the error of the said denominations as to the design of baptism a greater error than the observance of new moons, holy days, and the whole ritual of the law of Moses?" The writer says that "A satisfactory settlement of these and cognate questions would decide whether we in uniting with said orthodox denominations would be more latitudinarian than the apostles were in bearing with the Jerusalem and Corinthian Churches of their day." The writer falls into two errors.

First, He does not take into account at all the historic perspective which ought to be considered in any fair study of the Apostolic Church. The deficiencies to which he refers

characterized persons who had recently turned either from the worship of idols to the worship of the living God, or from the service of Moses to the service of Jesus Christ. There is a vast difference between persons growing up into a fuller, riper, completer knowledge of the facts and spirit of the Christian institution, and the condition of the church to-day to which he refers.

Second, He loses sight of the fact that our inquiry should be, must be, continually, What is the Lord's pleasure concerning this matter? His pleasure is recorded in the New Testament. We have there the model. Dr. Shields says in his essay on "The Historic Episcopate," (page 3), "In that one Catholic Apostolic Church we have an example and model of church unity." What shall we do with that model? Shall we strive for the unity of the church as it existed at the first, or shall we get up a model of our own, and labor to bring all men into harmony with it?

5. Restoration This brings us to a consideration of the plan which is known as "Restoration." This is in perfect accord with

the thought just quoted from Professor Shields. Restoration proposes to all believers in Christ that, regardless of opinions, prejudices, preferences, customs, we shall go back over continents and seas until we reach, in imagination, the Holy Land. That we shall go back through the intervening centuries until we sit, as it were, in the presence of the great Teacher, and we will receive from his immaculate lips a statement of the doctrine to be believed, of the duties to be discharged, and observing his majestic, sinless, moral and spiritual character, discover the standard of life to which we are to strive to attain. Can the world be brought back to Christianity according to Christ? To its creed, its ordinances, its life? To its doctrine, its fruit? To the oracles of God let us make our appeal.

In the midst of Paul's discussion of the problem of union in the city of Corinth, he said: "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus." To read this text as Paul wrote it we must insert the definite article before the word "Christ." So Paul wrote when he affirmed

that the great truth that Jesus is *the* Christ is the only foundation which any man can legitimately lay for the Church of Jesus Christ. If Paul was right, then the way to the reunion of Christendom is "Return to Christ." God said from the Mount of Transfiguration: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Can men by compromises be induced to submit mind and heart and will to Him who possesses all authority in heaven and on earth, or is it not more likely that they can be induced to surrender utterly and absolutely to him by insisting that he shall be heard in all that he says and in all that he authorizes to be said concerning the Christian system. Get back to Christ! be the watchword. If we will commit ourselves to Him he will guide us out of our confusion into such a unity as that for which he prayed, and the result will satisfy the desires of his heart—the world will believe that God sent him. This, after all, ought to be the real purpose which we have in view in praying to God, and pleading with Christians "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

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